

Intersections

Interdisciplinary Studies in Early Modern Culture

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Early Modern Medievalisms

The Interplay between Scholarly Reflection and Artistic Production

Edited by

Alicia C. Montoya Sophie van Romburgh Wim van Anrooij



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Illustration on the cover: Raymondin looking at Mélusine through a hole in the door. From Jean d'Arras, *Mélusine, Nouvellement imprimée* (Paris, Jean Trepperel: 1527–1532) detail frontispiece. Anonymous woodcut. Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France: Rés P. Y² 2788. (See also pages 266–268 in this volume.)

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INTRODUCTION: QUESTIONING EARLY MODERN MEDIEVALISMS

Alicia C. Montoya, Sophie van Romburgh and Wim van Anrooij

When we encounter the medieval in early modern culture, what do we see? Do we find a more or less deliberate use of and reflection upon the Middle Ages along the lines of what, over the past decades, we have come to call 'medievalism'? Do we find a re-creation of past times nostalgically praised as a native antiquity or, instead, denounced as the embodiment of ignorance for a renaissance to distinguish itself from? Or do we find a continuation of processes and practices that we today are used to identifying as medieval, but that may or may not have been perceived as such during the early modern period? What uses of the medieval and whose medievalism do we see in our early modern studies?

The concept of medievalism has, during the past few decades, given rise to a new subfield within literary and cultural studies. Leslie Workman, whose creation in 1979 of the journal Studies in Medievalism played a central role in the institutionalization of the field, was also one of the first to attempt to define the concept. On the most basic level, medievalism, he maintained, is 'the study of the Middle Ages on the one hand, and the use of the Middle Ages in everything from fantasy to social reform on the other'. Medievalism might accordingly be said to be restricted to the explicit negotiation with a shared construct called 'the Middle Ages'. Crucially, such study and use of the Middle Ages also defines what the Middle Ages actually are: 'medieval historiography, the study of the successive recreations of the Middle Ages by different generations, is the Middle Ages. And this of course is medievalism'. Workman's explanation thus emphasizes the field's generative characteristic: by seeking to re-create, studies and artistic productions actually create the Middle Ages in the process.

² Ibid.

¹ Workman L.J., "The Future of Medievalism", in Gallant J. (ed.), *Medievalism: The Year's Work for 1995* (Holland, MI: 1999) 12.

Other, later uses of the term medievalism focus more specifically on the historiography of scholarship dealing with the Middle Ages, and the ways in which this historiography may invite present-day scholars to re-evaluate accepted interpretations of specific medieval texts or traditions. Thus, the studies produced by the 'New Medievalists' of the 1990s typically dealt with the careers of the first nineteenth- and early twentieth-century academics who studied the Middle Ages and their literature. While the medievalism that originated around Workman in the 1970s paid particular attention to texts and traditions originating in the English-speaking world, the New Medievalism of the 1990s focused more frequently on continental Europe and France. And whereas the first school generated – and indeed continues to generate – case studies with a largely empirical focus, the latter sought also to relate the historiography of medieval studies to present-day theoretical debates. Yet despite these differences, both schools share a number of basic traits. Both share a concern with textuality and an interest in literary texts that surely help to explain why medievalism succeeded in gaining institutional respectability in the 1980s and 1990s, decades also marked by the combined influence of cultural studies and the new historicism. Both schools also share as their starting-point the idea that the Middle Ages – or the medieval, as we would prefer to term them here – are themselves a historical construct, and need always to be understood with reference to the culturally and historically determined interests of those engaged in studying them.

'Old' and 'new' medievalists, finally, share also a similar chronological framework, and it is this that the present volume would like to question. Indeed, a quick glance at some representative publications shows that medievalist studies are overwhelmingly focused on the modern period. The landmark volume produced by the New Medievalists in 1996, *Medievalism and the Modernist Temper*, contains seventeen essays, of which eleven focus exclusively on the nineteenth or twentieth century. This, of course, is because the authors estimate that serious academic study of the Middle Ages started only in the second half of the nineteenth century, when Germanic philology took root. Recent volumes of *Studies in Medievalism* display a similar slant.³ Leslie Work-

³ For instance, of the seven case studies published in the *Studies in Medievalism* 2009 volume, one deals with the period before 1800, while in the 2008 volume, two of the ten articles deal with the early modern period.

man himself drew a strong link between medievalism and Romanticism, even going so far as to suggest that, in the earliest usages of the term 'Romantic', the two terms were in fact seen as interchangeable.⁴ Thus, in the narrowest reading of the historical archive, medievalism would be a phenomenon that only arose with Romanticism – and in the English language, in fact, the term is first recorded in the 1850s – making it appear less relevant to search for forms of medievalism in the period before.⁵

While there is a case to be made for restricting the field of medievalism to the period after 1800, the present volume has arisen out of a desire to question whether the early modern culture of, roughly, 1500– 1800 did have its own variety of medievalism(s). We wondered how, closer to the medieval period, what we today identify as the medieval may have continued unobserved and uninterrupted in certain fields, while being considered a thing of the (imagined) past, for good or for ill, in others. Moreover, we believed that a conscious negotiation with the Middle Ages is only one in a range of attitudes toward the medieval. Therefore, rather than trying to seek a set of early modern examples or cases that fit a clearcut definition of medievalism, we thought it would be more productive to explore a very large range of early modern attitudes, conscious as well as unconscious, toward what we today would term the medieval, but what was not necessarily perceived as such by men and women living during the early modern period. The medievalism this volume addresses, in other words, is as much our own, twenty-first-century medievalism, as it is that of the early modern men and women who are its subject. Hence our choice in our volume title for early modern medievalisms, in the plural.

Our starting point, then, was that – whether one terms them 'medievalist' or not – the early modern period was marked by plural, diffuse discourses on the Middle Ages. Both scholarly work and artistic production created images of the philological Middle Ages, the imagined Middle Ages, the utopian Middle Ages, and even the anti-Middle Ages. Indeed, the last category is one that appeared particularly relevant to

 $^{^4}$ See especially his long article "Medievalism and Romanticism", Poetica~39--40~(1994)~1--44.

⁵ On the first uses of the term 'medievalism' in English, see Simmons C.A., "Medievalism: Its Linguistic History in Nineteenth-Century Britain", *Studies in Medievalism* 17 (2009) 28–35.

any discussion of early modern medievalisms, given that modernity itself was often explicitly predicated on an opposition between a past 'Dark Age' and a contemporary age of light. Contrary to studies of modern medievalism that tend to pay attention to more or less celebratory or approving views and uses of the medieval, we felt that discourses that implicitly or explicitly rejected the medieval should also be included within the panoply of early modern medievalisms, to the extent that these discourses, too, contributed to the construction of specific images of the Middle Ages. Emphasizing this diversity, the present volume therefore focuses on the interplay and tensions between discourses, continuities and discontinuities, and competing images of the medieval during the early modern period. A particular focus, as the subtitle suggests, is the interplay between scholarly erudition and artistic production. In other words, how did scholarly reflections on the medieval influence subsequent literary and artistic medievalisms, and how did artistic images, conversely, influence the development of a scholarly discourse?

Continuities and Discontinuities

The first section of the volume is devoted to several contributions that reflect on the notions of continuity and discontinuity between the medieval and the early modern. This is in keeping with our original idea that, in seeking to describe early modern medievalisms, we did not want to restrict ourselves only to cases in which artists and thinkers posited an explicit relation to the medieval. Un(der)stated or even unconscious relations, after all, can also be reflective of specific valorizations and attitudes toward the medieval. And more importantly, signalling continuity or, on the contrary, discontinuity represents the most basic way of establishing the existence of a 'Middle Age' in opposition to a contemporary, (early) modern one. Thus, this first section of the volume focuses largely on the Italian Renaissance and its European reception. The first two essays are on Petrarch, the author most commonly perceived as the herald of the new humanism of the Renaissance, and on his followers. In the first of these, "I Desire Therefore I am': Petrarch's Canzoniere Between the Medieval and Modern Notion of Desire", Elena Lombardi considers Petrarch not only as an early humanist but, equally importantly, as a late medieval author. Her

essay argues that it is, indeed, by ironically rewriting Dante's medieval notion of desire as a form of connection with God that Petrarch gives a new, characteristically 'modern' meaning to the concept. In the following essay, "Medievalisms in Latin Love Poetry of the Early Italian Quattrocento", Christoph Pieper again demonstrates how texts that have until recently been considered as typically classicist can also be regarded as medievalist. Focusing on Latin-language humanist poetry, Pieper reveals that, in seeking a form of *aemulatio* with the classical tradition, fifteenth-century humanist poets consciously incorporated medieval elements into their poetry. Thus, what is absent in their theorizing – reference to the medieval – reappears in their poetic practice, giving a distinctly 'alternative' flavour to these works that have, most often, only been considered in relation to classical Antiquity.

The following two essays focus on examples of continuity that betray a less self-conscious positioning of early modern authors against the medieval. Anne-Marie De Gendt's essay, "On Pleasure: Conceptions in Badius Ascensius' Stultiferae Naves (1501)", shows how the Flemish humanist Iodocus Badius Ascensius can, in more than one way, be described as 'a man in between': both humanist scholar and continuator of medieval traditions. Thus, in her study of the role Epicurus plays in Badius' Stultiferae Naves, she argues that its reference to classical literature, rather than making it a distinctly humanist text, actually reinforces the authority of medieval religious values perceived to correspond with classical thought. Rather than rupture, then, Badius' humanist medievalism betrays a sense of profound continuity. A similar sense of historical distance abolished, or simply not perceived as such, emerges from Tiphaine Karsenti's essay "From Historical Invention to Literary Myth: Ambivalences and Contradictions in the Early Modern Reception of the Franco-Trojan Genealogy". In it, Karsenti shows that when early modern French authors made use of the medieval myth telling of the Trojan ancestry of the French nation, they did so in an ambiguous manner. Increasingly rejecting the historical truth-value of the myth, they still granted it authority as a point of origin for distinctly French forms of national and royal representation. The medieval, in this case, was valued not in its own right – in fact, the historical inaccuracy of the myth was much commented on – but, rather, as the repository of images allowing humanist authors to link themselves to classical antiquity, as Vergil-like poets singing the praises of their king. Medievalism and humanism, once again, fuse.

The last essay of this first section presents a particularly striking example of an early modern attempt to adapt medieval concepts to a new setting. In "Early Modern Angelic Song in Francesco Patrizi's L'Amorosa Filosofia (1577)", Jacomien Prins demonstrates that, countering natural science's deconstruction of the medieval notion of the music of the spheres, Francesco Patrizi nonetheless succeeded in reintroducing the notion of celestial harmony, as expressed now through the musical sublime. In other words, the disenchantment of the world produced by the abandonment of key aspects of the medieval world-view did not, unexpectedly, lead to a new world-view, but rather led to a 're-enchantment' of the world, in which the function previously fulfilled by the physical universe was now fulfilled by the aesthetic notion of the sublime. The sense of loss, a loss equated with the passing away of the medieval, thereby becomes crucial in defining a new, modern aesthetic.

The Interplay between Scholarship and Artistic Production

From the discussion of continuities and discontinuities between the medieval and early modern, the second section of the volume moves on to a discussion of the manifold ways in which artists in the early modern period made use in their works of elements identifiable as 'medieval'. These are more conscious and explicit appropriations of the medieval, which authors and artists invoked for purposes of (political) legitimation or, in another vein, for satirical or more playful purposes. In the first article in the section, "Rabelaisian Medievalisms: Pantagruel and Amadis", Paul J. Smith shows how the development of François Rabelais' career as an author was substantially conditioned by the fluctuating fashion in his time for various forms of medieval(ist) fiction. While, in his early works, Rabelais responded to the chivalric prose novels that were popular in the 1530s, in his following works he reacted to the popularity of the *Amadis* genre and, later, to its increasing contestation in literary circles. The medieval here, rather than being a phenomenon belonging to the past, was perceived by Rabelais as a central element in the contemporary, sixteenth-century literary field.

The following three articles discuss ways in which the medieval was invoked by the early moderns, in different national and historical contexts, as an instrument of political and religious legitimation. In "The Portrait of Lady Katherine Grey and her Son: Iconographic

Medievalism as a Legitimation Strategy", Martin Spies examines an intentionally archaic, medievalist portrait of Lady Katherine Grey, arguing that its medievalism served as an argument for the legitimation of her marriage and the recognition of her son as the lawful heir of the House of Suffolk. By evoking medieval ruler portraits on one hand and the pre-Reformation iconography of Virgin and Child on the other, the medieval was valued not on historical terms, but as the repository of an iconographic vocabulary still readily understood by the painter's contemporaries. A second iconographic case study is provided by Waldemar Kowalski in his "Medieval Tradition Presented in Early Modern Paintings and Inscriptions in Little Poland". In this essay, Kowalski shows how epigraphs and murals in monastery and parish churches, especially after the mid-century wars, evoked the medieval past in order to link it to the present: just as the contemporary Polish nation and Catholic Church felt besieged by enemies (invasions of Protestant and Orthodox neighbours), so too had it in the past been perceived to face threats from without (Mongol and Tatar invasions) and from within (Jewish population). Medievalism thus participated in the early modern creation of national identities, including, in their more extreme forms, distinct anti-Semitic elements. Finally, in "'O Fundatrix Begginarum': St Begga and her Office in Early Modern Beguine Scholarship and Musical Sources", Pieter Mannaerts discusses the uses that the medieval traditions surrounding the Merovingian saint Begga were put to in seventeenth-century scholarship and music. In what was essentially a foundation polemic, scholars legitimated newly established early modern traditions by means of a medieval one. Interestingly, however, actual liturgical practice differed somewhat from the findings of scholars. The office performed in early modern beguinages, in fact, was the one scholars regarded as less authentic, thereby showing that while the office was perceived to go back to medieval antecedents, its medievalism was in the final count more important than its historically medieval character.

Moving from public discourse and legitimation strategies to private entertainment, the element of play comes to the fore in the last three essays of this section. These essays focus on texts produced during the same time and historical context, namely eighteenth-century France. In the first of these, "Medievalism and Magic: Illustrating Classical French Fairy Tales", Daphne Hoogenboezem describes how the earliest illustrators of French fairy tales consciously used archaic or naïve elements to give a pseudo-medieval patina to the fairy tale texts. In

doing so, illustrators were responding to elements already present in the fairy tales themselves, which emphasized popular and medievalist aspects to create a contrast with classicist aesthetic ideals. However, just as importantly, by mixing medievalist and classicist styles, they were creating a new aesthetic in which the medieval was an important element within a magical setting, a fantasy period rather than a strictly historical one. A similar vision of the imaginary medieval past emerges from Aurélie Zygel-Basso's essay "A Fairy Troubadour? Medieval Matter and the 'Bon Vieux Temps' in Women's Fairy Tales (1730–1750)". In mid-century women's fairy tales, what was valued in the medieval past was not the specifics of a precise historical period but, rather, a sense of otherness that fulfilled, in the first place, an ornamental role within an overall syncretist aesthetic. A second, equally important aspect, however, were the possibilities the medieval was felt to offer in defining a new ideal of courtly politeness (politesse) and frankness: in this sense, medievalism also had a distinctly moral function. In the last essay of this section, "Old French in the Eighteenth Century: Aucassin et Nicolette", by Peter Damian-Grint, these same elements of ornamental medievalism and moral value reappear. Like fairy tale illustrators, eighteenth-century adapters of the medieval tale Aucassin et Nicolette consciously introduced archaic elements to heighten the text's ornamental medievalism. At the same time, however, by also adding to it elements of eighteenth-century sensibilité, these authors sought to give the text a place within the contemporary literary landscape. Paradoxically, the resulting medievalism is thus at the same time both a distance and a closeness, as the medieval text is perceived both to be radically other and basically the same as early modern aesthetic ideals.

Conceptualizing the Medieval

In the third and final section of the volume, the essays turn to the question, raised by the preceding two sections, of how the medieval was explicitly conceptualized in the early modern period. Views and value judgements that sometimes remained implicit in artistic uses of the medieval were formulated more directly by a number of scholars and artists. The section opens with two essays describing valuations of the medieval that could be described as 'traditional', to the extent that they reflect the mixture of contempt and interest already found in some early renaissance reflections on the medieval. The first of these,

Coen Maas' "'Covered in the Thickest Darkness of Forgetfulness': Humanist Commonplaces and the Defence of Medievalism in Janus Dousa's Metrical History (1599)" explores an example of humanist medievalist historiography. It shows how the Dutch historian Janus Dousa's use of humanist commonplaces - including that of the Dark Age – was motivated by his desire to foreground his own originality, and does not preclude a real admiration for medieval martial virtue, which he connected to the present-day Dutch Republic. In the second essay, "Reproducing the Middle Ages: Abbé Jean-Joseph Rive (1730-1791) and the Study of Manuscript Illumination at the Turn of the Early Modern Period", Andrea Worm discusses Jean Joseph Rive's ambivalent stance on medieval manuscript illumination. While he was one of the first to devote serious attention to medieval miniatures, as evidenced by his superb reproductions, Rive continued to decry the barbarity of the High Middle Ages, and presented his work as primarily of antiquarian interest. His failure to resolve this contradiction, argues Worm, appears to underlie later, post-Romantic criticisms of his work.

The next three essays describe more complex early modern reflections on the medieval. Joost Keizer's "Michelangelo out of Focus: Medievalism as Absent Life in Italian Renaissance Art" returns again to the Italian Renaissance as a formative period for the early modern positioning in relation to the medieval. In an exploration of authorial presence in painting, in particular in Michelangelo's work, Keizer argues that, in contrast to the anonymity of the medieval, lifelikeness and the foregrounding of the author were intertwined for modernity. In response to growing criticism of his overpowering presence at the expense of religious subject-matter, Michelangelo therefore sought to absent himself from his later work by turning to an unnaturalistic, medievalist stance, whereby, crucially, 'medievalism was not so much understood as the retrieval of a historical past but as an imagination of an alternative to modern painting'. In the second essay in the series, "Jean Mabillon's Middle Ages: On Medievalism, Textual Criticism, and Monastic Ideals", Mette Bruun provocatively asks whether Jean Mabillon can actually be considered a medievalist in the modern sense of the term. While his scholarly work in diplomatics focused largely on the period we now consider medieval, she argues, he himself hardly used the term 'medieval' - a stance he shared with other scholars examined in our volume, including Janus Dousa. His work, furthermore, was organized not according to historical chronology,

but according to a scale of moral virtue which implied that medieval texts were capable of speaking directly to modern readers. Yet at the same time, the very act of scholarship created a distance between the early modern reader and these same medieval texts. Ultimately, this is therefore a paradoxical medievalism, predicated both on a distance and closeness of the two eras not unlike the one described in Damian-Grint's essay. This same questioning of early modern medievalism is again taken up in the final contribution of this series and volume, Adam Shear's "The Early Modern Construction of Medieval Jewish Thought". Examining the Jewish Haskalah or modernizing movement of the late eighteenth century, Shear argues that, rather than representing a radical break with tradition, the Haskalah can be viewed as a continuation of trends already visible in the (earlier) early modern period. These trends looked back to medieval religious philosophy as an attempt to reconcile reason and revelation, and saw the period as a kind of classical 'golden age'. Because, however, this view did not depend on a sense of rupture, Shear proposes to consider it as a form of 'continuous medievalism', that may or may not be characteristic of the Jewish religious-philosophical tradition and/or early modern period in general.

The Specificity of Early Modern Medievalisms

In concluding our volume with Bruun's and Shear's thought-provoking contributions, we wished to underline once again the way in which the early modern cases presented here ultimately problematize the notion of medievalism itself, at least as understood in its post-Romantic sense. From these collected articles emerge at least three strands in early modern relations to the medieval that appear specific to this period. These could be described, respectively, as a sense of the continuity or even *coincidence* of the medieval and early modern; medievalism as a specific position in the debate on *classicism*; and the medieval as a *moral* stance or point of reference.

Several of the volume's essays discuss forms of engagement with the medieval in which the early moderns, rather than perceiving a clear break between their own era and the medieval past, instead operated on the implicit assumption of a basic continuity between these two periods. Thus, for the scholars writing the history of the beguinage

tradition, as demonstrated by Mannaerts, early modern practices were regarded as more or less unproblematic continuations of medieval ones – even when this was, demonstrably, not the case. Likewise, in the paintings and inscriptions discussed by Kowalski, medieval historical events were seen to presage later developments, as the Polish nation perceived itself to be threatened time and again by various forces and ethnic groups. But as this latter case shows, the sense of continuity could easily veer into a telescoping of the medieval and the early modern, whereby the two were felt not only to be contiguous, but actually to coincide. In addition, there is an important sense in which the medieval and early modern coincide simply by virtue of the survival of medieval or medievalist artefacts into the early modern period: thus, when Rabelais positions himself against the medieval in Pantagruel and its sequels, he is fully aware of the medieval as a distinct historical period, yet still feels the need to react to the contemporary popularity of medievalist literary texts. In yet another variety, finally, this sense of the coincidence of the early modern and medieval can also assume the form of more or less conscious syncretism, such as can be found in the French fairy tales examined by Hoogenboezem and Zvgel-Basso.

Significantly, as shown by Damian-Grint and Bruun, early moderns' awareness of the Middle Ages as a distinct historical period did not preclude their *simultaneously* construing their own works as a link in a larger, continuous tradition. There is, as noted by Bruun, a monastic tendency to regard medieval predecessors as 'contemporaries in the spirit'. And thus, as she goes on to argue, what may appear to us moderns as a Janus-faced medievalism, appealing at the same time to a sense of distance and of contiguity, is in fact a coherent stance to the early moderns. It is in our opinion, also, a defining characteristic of early modern medievalisms, as distinct from their Romantic varieties. If the French revolution marked the end of the early modern period, in the most fundamental sense, by giving a new meaning to the term 'revolution' itself – no longer an event within a cyclical series, but a singular break with the past – this was because conceptions of time were also changing, moving from models based on notions of synchronicity and cyclic return to conceptions based on linearity and diachronic development. Within the former conception, there was nothing odd about the medieval being synchronous with the early modern, or with medievals conversing with their early modern counterparts (as they actually did in a popular literary subgenre of this period, the so-called dialogues of the dead). The early modern cases examined in this volume lead us to agree, finally, with Nils Holger Petersen's assessment that 'medievalism should not be restricted to features in which a historical consciousness is explicitly at work' because, in a sense, the Middle Ages never ended, but – as our cases demonstrate – are recreated over and over again.⁶ Or, put another way, perhaps it would be productive to consider not the Middle Ages as an inconvenient disruption in a progressive historical narrative running from classical antiquity to the Renaissance but, rather, to consider the Renaissance as a temporary wrinkle in a period that began with the transition from Antiquity to the Middle Ages, and in which we find ourselves living still today.

A second theme that thus emerges from these essays is that of medievalism's complex relationship to the Renaissance classicist ideal. In a number of the cases presented, medievalism can actually be reinterpreted as a form of classicism. Petrarch as described by Lombardi, the medieval topos of the Trojan genealogy of the Franks, and Cimabue as perceived by the Italian Renaissance, all offer examples of reappropriations of medieval elements within a classicist framework. Thus, Petrarch's rewriting of medieval conceptions of divine desire was instrumental in the creation of a new, distinctly modern notion that could be legitimized by reference to the Ovidian model. For early modern adapters of the commonplace of the Franco-Trojan genealogy, what was crucial was not its medieval origin but, rather, the link it made possible to Vergilian epic. The medieval painter Cimabue was reclaimed and integrated into the Renaissance canon by rebranding him not as a medieval but as a modern, by virtue of his lifegiving authorship. In all of these cases, the medieval was stripped of its very medievalness in order to make it contemporary – a stance not completely unlike the medievals' previous treatment of classical antiquity. In other cases, the medieval was used more self-consciously and more strategically, as an element serving in the literary demarcation of authors seeking to position themselves in relation to – or even against – the prevailing classicist aesthetic. These authors resorted to the medieval as a source of formal or thematic innovation: Janus

⁶ Petersen N.H., "Medievalism and Medieval Reception: A Terminological Question", *Studies in Medievalism* 17 (2009) 42.

Dousa did so to underscore his own originality, as did Latin humanist poets seeking to distinguish themselves from the Petrarchan model. But just as often, just as the early modern and the medieval were telescoped into one another, so were the classical and the medieval merged, sometimes to such an extent that determining what element belongs to which source becomes something of an academic exercise. Does Marrasio follow more closely the model of Geoffrey of Vinsauf in describing his beloved, or that of Ovid – and is such a quantitative/ qualitative parcelling out of influence finally really relevant to a poetics conceived not only in terms of competitive aemulatio but, perhaps just as importantly, in terms of copia – understood both as imitation and as copiousness? What is clear, in any case, is that the plurality of early modern medievalist discourses was fundamentally conditioned by the period's relation to Antiquity – that previous age of light – even when it also reflected a real interest in the Middle Ages as such. Paradoxically, therefore, early modern medievalisms can be conceived as a form of classicism as well as anti-classicism, a reflection on the modern self as much as on the medieval other.

Finally, a third strand that can be teased out from the various contributions to this volume is that of the medieval as moral reference point. There emerges, in quite a number of the cases examined, a sense of loss and, in some instances, of almost Romantic nostalgia associated with the medieval. The lost harmonic world of the Middle Ages was perceived by Francesco Patrizi as something to be recreated anew, just as the classical topos of the Golden Age was applied by the Jewish philosophical tradition to the medieval past. This was strongly linked to a conception of the medieval as a moral grounding-point. The Middle Ages were conceived not as a chronological category but, rather, as a moral one; hence, in calling a phenomenon 'medieval', early moderns were not attempting to situate it within a closed-off historical period, but were ascribing to it specific moral virtues. In the world of eighteenth-century fairy-tale authors, the Middle Ages were an imaginary site, the original 'bon vieux temps' and the source of modern ideals of politeness and frankness. For Jean Mabillon a century earlier, the most important hierarchies were not those imposed by chronological divisions, but those that resulted from degrees of saintliness, making the medieval in some aspects superior to the early modern. And even earlier, already during the Italian Renaissance, critics of 'the charms of art' held up the Middle Ages as an alternative source of religious and artistic integrity. The medieval, in these cases and in others, was

construed as an anchoring-point for a set of values that remained relevant still to the early moderns. At the very least, the Middle Ages were the source of a common language still spoken by them: this could be the iconographic, religious language used in the portrait of Lady Katherine Grey, or it could be the literary language of commonplaces used by authors invoking the Trojan origins of the French monarchy. In its richest form, this appeal to a medieval past was an appeal to a world perceived as more unified and more coherent than the contemporary, *critique*-riven, war-torn and diasporic reality early moderns perceived around themselves. Thus, from the valiant ancestors of the early modern Dutch nation, too busy practising martial virtue to engage in mere book-writing, to the memory of the founding fathers of Christianity, what the Middle Ages offered was also the retrospective reflection of contemporary (ecclesiastical, national) communities, and – thereby – an idealized image of the origins of modernity itself.

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CONTINUITIES AND DISCONTINUITIES BETWEEN THE MEDIEVAL AND THE EARLY MODERN

'I DESIRE THEREFORE I AM': PETRARCH'S *CANZONIERE* BETWEEN THE MEDIEVAL AND THE MODERN NOTION OF DESIRE

Elena F. Lombardi

The first stanza of Canzone 126, "Chiare fresche e dolci acque" is one of the most memorable texts of Petrarch's *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*, and arguably a quintessential Petrarchan text, as it evokes all the most relevant traits of his collection of vernacular lyrics. In it, Petrarch reconstructs by memory ('remembers') the apparition of his beloved Laura in a supremely idealized springtime context. The dialectic between a poetics of scattering ('membra') and a poetic strategy of re-composition ('rimembra'), the relation between self and landscape, between memory and identity, the theme of desire and its frustration are all implied in this short turn of lines.

Chiare, fresche et dolci acque ove le belle membra pose colei che sola a me par donna; gentil ramo ove piacque (con sospir' mi rimembra) a lei di fare al bel fiancho colonna; erba e fior' che la gonna leggiadra ricoverse co l'angelico seno; aere sacro sereno ove Amor co' begli occhi il cor m' aperse: date udienza insieme a le dolenti mie parole estreme.¹

¹ 'Clear, fresh, sweet waters where she who alone seems lady to me rested her lovely body, gentle branch where it pleased her (with sighing I remember) to make a column for her lovely side, grass and flowers that her rich garment covered along with her angelic breast, sacred bright air where Love opened my heart with her lovely eyes: listen all together to my sorrowful dying words.' Petrarch's text is quoted from Canzoniere, ed. G. Contini (Turin: 1964). Translations are taken from Petrarch's Lyric Poems, transl. R. Durling (Cambridge: 1976). The question whether the best fitting title for Petrarch's work is Rerum vulgarium fragmenta (as Petrarch himself named it) or Canzoniere (as it is more frequently called in the tradition), or even Rime sparse (from

In representing Laura as an anatomized character, split into beautiful limbs, Petrarch is referencing – as well as powerfully rewriting – a Dantesque cipher, Beatrice's 'belle membra' from *Purgatorio* 31.

Together with other elements taken from Dante's complex Garden of Eden, the reference to the 'belle membra' both recalls and disavows, as Nancy Vickers and others have shown, a whole Dantesque 'programme' – with a prime example of what John Freccero has indicated as 'possibly the first example in the West of what Harold Bloom has called the "'anxiety' of influence"'.²

In particular, I would argue that, here and elsewhere in the *Canzoniere*, Petrarch is tampering with Dante's conception and role of erotic and spiritual desire; furthermore, in doing so, he surpasses his predecessor to shape a truly modern conception of desire. Petrarchan desire marks the transition between a notion of desire as a proof of existence of the other, and ultimately the Other, to a concept of desire as the proof of existence of the self: from 'I desire, therefore It exists' to 'I desire, therefore I am' – the latter being Jacques Lacan's radical reformulation of the Cartesian *cogito*. Petrarch's understanding of desire derives from the intersection of a medieval Christian, 'Dantesque' notion of desire with a classical, 'Ovidian' one.

After reaching the Garden of Eden at the top of Purgatory, two thirds into the narrative of the *Comedy*, Dante the traveller rejoins Beatrice, the object of the love-poetry of his youth. Transported into an eternally fresh springtime, which is very much in the grain of Petrarch's rewriting, the reader of the *Comedy* is always surprised to witness the lovely Beatrice turning into a harsh critic of the poet/pilgrim. Before serving as a guide to the last step of his journey, Beatrice cruelly scolds Dante for his inability or unwillingness to follow the path that she had indicated to him through her beauty and her love in their youth, and to learn a crucial lesson from her death: that no earthly object of desire, not even the most beautiful and perfect, is worthy of fixation,

the first line of the first poem of the collection) is still debated. Here, I use these terms interchangeably.

² Freccero J., "The Fig Tree and the Laurel: Petrarch's Poetics", *Diacritics* 5, 1 (1975) 34–40

³ Lacan J., Le Séminaire XI, Les quatre concepts fondamentaux de la psychanalyse (Paris: 1973) 141.

but must rather be transcended as a step towards the ultimate aim of all desires: God.⁴

Mai non t'appresentò natura o arte piacer, quanto le belle membra in ch'io rinchiusa fui, e che so' 'n terra sparte; e se 'l sommo piacer sì ti fallio per la mia morte, qual cosa mortale dovea poi trarre te nel suo disio? *Purgatorio* 31, 49–54.⁵

The two passages show remarkable similarities, and reveal the extent of Petrarch's interfering with Dante. In both cases we have a beautiful woman, indeed the most beautiful woman on earth. She – or, better, her body parts – are clearly the object of desire of a poet who is fictionalizing reality and/or reifying fiction; in simpler terms, the artist is writing an autobiography. In both cases her limbs are scattered – in Dante by death, in Petrarch by the poet's creative surgical scalpel. Earth is connected to the woman's body: in the case of Beatrice as burial place, in that of Laura as an idealized landscape where the woman is sitting; and, whereas the buried woman is eternalized in heaven, the living lady is fixed in memory. Finally, both poets cast themselves as characters in an extreme confessional situation. Nevertheless, two very different conceptions of self, the body and desire emerge from these two excerpts. In her excellent comparative analysis of the two texts and their context, Francesca Southerden shows how Dante's poetic strategy aims at 're-turning' (by recuperating and editing) to the erotic discourse of the past and 'redirecting' his desire,

⁴ In the previous canto Beatrice had quite poignantly explained the difference between mortal and blessed beauty, which Dante the character was unable to understand. See *Purgatorio* 30, 124–129: 'Sì tosto come in su la soglia fui/ di mia seconda etade e mutai vita,/ questi si tolse a me, e diessi altrui./ Quando di carne a spirto era salita,/ e bellezza e virtù cresciuta m'era,/ fu' io a lui men cara e men gradita' ('Once I had reached the threshold of my second age, when I changed lives, he took himself from me and gave himself to others. When I had risen to spirit from my flesh, as beauty and virtue in me became more rich, to him I was less dear and less than pleasing'). Text and translation (by Robert Hollander) are taken from the online Princeton Dante Project (http://etcweb.princeton.edu/dante/).

⁵ 'Never did art or nature set before you beauty as great as in the lovely members that enclosed me, now scattered and reduced to dust. And if the highest beauty failed you in my death, what mortal thing should then have drawn you to desire it?'

whereas Petrarch aims at 'turning it about', 'giving errant desire free reign'.6

As a consequence of Petrarch's own characterization of his life and work as a contemptuous refutation of his own times, an inclination toward antiquity, as well as projection into a timeless 'other age' – as we read, for instance, in his Letter to Posterity⁷ – much attention has been focused on Petrarch as the first humanist, indeed the 'standard', quintessential humanist; less so to Petrarch as the last medieval author. Certain scholarly traditions, such as the Anglo-American for instance, often view Petrarch solely as a humanist rejecting his own times and constructing a new concept of the self through bypassing the Middle Ages and philologically recuperating the classical tradition. This paper brings to the fore a more complex perspective, in which the new sense of self and other consists of a complex negotiation between the two traditions. This confirms the unique position of Petrarch's life and work on the cusp between the medieval and the early modern periods, as well as his awareness of the significance and exceptionality of his situation.

Petrarch, and after him the early Italian humanists, mark the end of the Middle Ages by signalling their beginning – by registering the severance of the continuity between antiquity and the Middle Ages, a distinction foreign to the medieval mind. Petrarch is already 'looking back' at the Middle Ages, not as an era that has passed but is passing, and he announces the future by unearthing the past perfect of the past. The conceptualization of the Middle Ages which takes place in the Italian humanism revolves around the alienation of antiquity from the Middle Ages, and leads to the awareness of the cuspidal era they are leaving in. The oldest (antiquity) creates a fracture between the

⁶ Southerden F., "Performative Desires: Sereni's Re-staging of Dante and Petrarch", in Gragnolati M. – Suerbaum A. (eds.), *Aspects of the Performative in Medieval Culture* (Berlin: 2010) 165–196.

⁷ Posteritati in F. Petrarca, Prose, ed. G. Martellotti – P.G. Ricci – E. Carrara – E. Bianchi (Milan–Naples: 1955) 2: 'Incubui unice, inter multa, ad notitiam vetustati, quoniam michi semper etas ista displicuit; ut, nisi me amor carorum in diversum traheret, qualibet etate natus esse semper optaverim, et hanc oblivisci, nisus animo me aliis semper inserere' ('I devoted myself, though not exclusively, to the study of ancient times, since I always disliked my own period; so that, if it hadn't been for the love of those dear to me, I should have preferred being born in any other age, forgetting this one; and I have always tried to transport myself mentally to other times'). Translations are taken from Letters from Petrarch, transl. M. Bishop (Bloomington: 1966).

old (Middle Ages) and the new (early modern), and gives rise to the 'newest' discourse of modernity.

I additionally argue that Petrarch's approach to the medieval is not one of rejection, but actually one of subtle undermining, holding to a strategy that is rarely attributed to him: irony. Indeed, it is through irony, rather than denial, that Petrarch ultimately overcomes the 'anxiety of influence' deriving from Dante, as his handling of Dante's discourse of desire proves.⁸

In comparing Dante's and Petrarch's treatments of desire, I view Dante's as the culmination, the veritable 'melting pot' of a rich and complex medieval discourse on desire, which permeates of itself large parts of the medieval epistemology, from theology to science to poetry. The centrality of desire in medieval culture is theologically based. Paul's establishment of the essence of the Christian God as Love provided the starting point for a long and nuanced narrative of theological desire, through a discourse that explores the modalities of the bridge or leap of faith that leads the Christian self to God. Desire is the privileged channel through which the (mortal, corruptible, sinful) human being experiences the absolute perfection of God. Although always tending toward the infinite, this desire is far from being desperate or unfulfilled. It is, indeed, a paradoxical force: neither yearning nor fulfilment, but both – excluding both the detachment of satiety and the anxiety of longing.

As its point of departure, the medieval formulation of desire takes the ideas of the classical world as filtered through the Latin world. In the ancients' view, desire is an ineluctable cosmic drive and, at the same time, a potentially destructive force for the self. In particular,

⁸ It is traditionally held that Petrarch overcomes the 'anxiety of influence' stemming from Dante by simply not mentioning him. I would argue instead that Petrarch appropriates irony, a quintessential Dantesque strategy, in order to undermine his predecessor. For irony in Dante, see Freccero J., *Dante: The Poetics of Conversion* (Cambridge: 1986).

⁹ On the theme of desire in the Middle Ages, see Leclerq J., The Love of Learning and the Desire For God (New York: 1974) and Monks and Love in Twelfth Century France (Oxford: 1979); Gardiner F.C., The Pilgrimage of Desire: A Study of Theme and Genre in Medieval Literature (Leiden: 1971); Turner D., Eros and Allegory. Medieval Exegesis of the Song of Songs (Kalamazoo: 1995). The following outline of the theme of desire in the Middle Ages is taken from Lombardi E., The Syntax of Desire: Language and Love in Augustine, the Modistae, Dante (Toronto: 2007). On the proof of existence through desire see Bynum C., The Resurrection of the Body in Western Christianity, 200–1336 (New York: 1995) 236, 253 and Bodei R., Ordo amoris. Conflitti terreni e felicità celeste (Bologna: 1991) 157, note 13.

erotic desire was viewed as a malady – a great opportunity for chaos, which poets welcome and philosophers fight. 10 The Christian 'taming' of the ancients' desire can be traced back to Augustine. In his commentary on the Gospel of John, Augustine glosses the Vergilian 'trahit sua quemque voluptas' as the desire for God which Christ inspires in every human being, thereby appropriating and amending the cosmic, all-powerful force of ancient desire and, at the same time, emptying it of its chaotic impact.¹¹ Key to the Augustinian strategy is the distinction between the 'transitive' uti (the love for the creature insofar as it is referred to the creator) and the 'intransitive' frui (love for God per se). In the first book of the De doctrina christiana, Augustine explains the two terms through a beautiful metaphor of exile: things to be used are, he says, like the vessels that bring the traveller home, which is the end point of the pilgrim's desire, and, therefore, the only thing to be enjoyed. The mistake the pilgrim might make is to start enjoying the journey itself and lose sight of the homeland. 12 Human life is a long

¹⁰ Although unknown to the Middle Ages, the work of the poet-philosopher Lucretius provides a prime example of this contrast. His *De rerum natura* opens with a celebration of cosmic/reproductive desire ('Alma Venus'), and later ventures into a condemnation of desire as an obstacle to the philosopher (Book IV), who must learn to love without desire. For desire in the classical world, see Nussbaum M., *The Therapy of Desire: Theory and Practice in Hellenistic Ethics* (Princeton: 1994).

II In Ioannis Evangelio XXVI, 4 in Patrologia Latina, ed. J.P. Migne (Paris: Migne, 1844–1864) vol. XXXV (www.augustinus.it): 'Porro si poetae dicere licuit: "Trahit sua quemque voluptas", non necessitas, sed voluptas; non obligatio, sed delectatio, quanto fortius nos dicere debemus trahi hominem ad Christum, qui delectatur veritate, delectatur beatitudine, delectatur iustitia, delectatur sempiterna vita, quod totum Christum est?' ('Moreover, if it was allowed to a poet to say, "His own pleasure draws each man", not need, but pleasure, not obligation but delight, how much more forcefully ought we to say that a man is drawn to Christ who delights in truth, delights in happiness, delights in justice, delights in eternal life – and all this is Christ?'). Translations are taken from Tractates on the Gospel of John, transl. J.W. Rettig (Washington, DC: 1988–1993).

¹² De doctrina christiana 1, 3–4 in Patrologia Latina, ed. J.P. Migne (Paris: Migne, 1844–1864) vol. XXXIV (www.augustinus.it): 'Res ergo aliae sunt quibus fruendum est, aliae quibus utendum, aliae quae fruuntur et utuntur. Illae quibus fruendum est, nos beatos faciunt; istis quibus utendum est tendentes ad beatitudinem adiuvamur et quasi adminiculamur, ut ad illas, quae nos beatos faciunt, pervenire atque his inhaerere possimus. [...] Frui est enim amore inhaerere alicui rei propter se ipsam. Uti autem, quod in usum venerit, ad id quod amas obtinendum referre, si tamen amandum est. Nam usus inlicitus abusus potius vel abusio nominandus est. Quomodo ergo, si essemus peregrini, qui beate vivere nisi in patria non possemus, eaque peregrinatione utique miseri et miseriam finire cupientes in patriam redire vellemus, opus esse vel terrestribus vel marinis vehiculis quibus utendum esset ut ad patriam, qua fruendum erat, pervenire valeremus; quod si amoenitates itineris et ipsa gestatio vehiculorum nos delectaret, conversi ad fruendum his, quibus uti debuimus, nollemus cito via finire et perversa suavitate implicati alienaremur a patria, cuius suavitas faceret beatos, sic in

journey through the realm of use, a 'holy desire' ('desiderium sanctum') that must be obsessively fixated upon and directed toward the homeland/God, and must never be ensnared in the traps of earthly desire, nor enjoy what is solely to be used, until the creature is fulfilled in the fruition of God.

The theme of the 'pilgrimage of desire' becomes a commonplace in medieval culture. It describes the wandering state of the human soul away from (and back to) God. Embodiment is both the mark of loss of the initial conjunction between the soul and God and the first step into a lively and cryptic narrative of desire. On earth, both signs and things are outlines of this discourse/map of desire that, if correctly interpreted, leads the soul back to its maker.

Secular versions of desire interact in intricate ways with Christian desire in medieval culture, and their mutual exchange radically alters the course of both the history and the culture of desire in the West. For instance, one very interesting chapter in the medieval history of desire is the twelfth century, a period in which theologians (such as Bernard and his opponent Abelard), mystics (Bernard's correspondent Hildegard of Bingen), theoreticians of desire (Andreas Cappellanus), the Provençal troubadours, and the French poets of the so-called tradition of courtly love all operated in a relatively small geographical

huius mortalitatis vita peregrinantes a Domino, si redire in patria volumus, ubi beati esse possimus, utendum est hoc mundo, non fruendum, ut invisibilia Dei per ea, quae facta sunt, intellecta conspiciantur, hoc est, ut de corporalibus temporalibusque rebus aeterna et spiritalia capiamus' ('There are some things which are to be enjoyed, some which are to be used and some whose function is both to enjoy and to use. Those which are to be enjoyed make us happy; those which are to be used assist us and give us a boost, so to speak, as we press on towards our happiness, so that we may reach and hold fast to the things which make us happy. [...] To enjoy something is to hold fast to it in love for its own sake. To use something is to apply whatever it may be to the purpose of obtaining what you love – if indeed it is something that ought to be loved. The improper use of something should be termed abuse. Suppose we were travelers who could live happily only in our homeland, and because our absence made us unhappy, we wished to put an end to our misery and return there: we would need transport by land or sea which we could use to travel to our homeland, the object of our enjoyment. But if we were fascinated by the delights of the journey and the actual traveling, we would be perversely enjoying things that we should be using; and we would be reluctant to finish our journey quickly, being ensnared in the wrong kind of pleasure and estranged from the homeland whose pleasures could make us happy. So in this mortal life we are like travelers away from our Lord: if we wish to return to the homeland where we can be happy we must use this world, not enjoy it, in order to discern the invisible attributes of God, which are understood through what has been made or, in other words, to derive eternal and spiritual value from corporeal and temporal things'). Translations are taken from On Christian Teaching, transl. R.H. Green (Oxford: 1997).

area. The exchanges and negotiations between secular and religious literature produced milestones of Western love poetry as well as seminal themes in the Western culture of desire such as the notions of 'frustrated love' and 'amor de lohn'.

A particularly intriguing picture of desire is presented in the early Italian love poetry of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. As soon as the troubadour and courtly love tradition was imported to Italy, it underwent a radical change. Beginning with the Sicilian School and culminating with the Stilonovo, love and desire (and woman) were sublimated into a midway point between the poet and knowledge and/or God. Within this scenario, Dante is the poet who most firmly established desire as a form of connection with God. 13 In the Vita Nuova (The New Life, 1293), the work in which he collected and commented on the poems dedicated to his love for Beatrice, Dante investigated at length the modalities of erotic desire in both its destructive and productive aspects. In doing so, Dante established himself as a vernacular poet (as a consequence of being a lover) – an aspect that is very present in Petrarch's own enterprise in the Canzoniere. In the Convivio (The Banquet, 1304), Dante explored the intersection between the trajectories of the soul's desire for knowledge and its desire for God. In the *Comedy*, Dante integrated the cosmological desire of science, the courtly desire for woman and the mystical desire for God to create an eschatology ruled by desire.

Within Dante's complex and highly nuanced theory of desire, one theme emerges with force: the fact that desire (for the 'angelicized' beloved, for knowledge, for God) is a key element in keeping the poet/lover/Christian on the path that leads him to the vision of, and the writing about, God. For Dante, as for Augustine, each terrestrial desire needs to be inserted in the grander scheme leading to God, the absolute object of desire. The *Comedy* begins with a pilgrim who has lost the straight path ('la diritta via era smarrita', *Inferno* 1, 3) and who regains

¹³ For desire in early Italian poetry and Dante, see Barolini T., "Purgatory as Paradigm: Traveling the New-and-Never-Before-Traveled Path of this Life/Poem", in Barolini T., The Undivine Comedy: Detheologizing Dante (Princeton: 1992) 99–121; "Guittone's 'Or si parrà,' Dante's 'Doglia mi reca' and the Commedia's Anatomy of Desire", Italian Quarterly 37 (2000) 33–49; and "Beyond (Courtly) Dualism: Thinking about Gender in Dante's Lyrics", in Storey W. – Barolini T. (eds.), Dante for the New Millennium (New York: 2003) 65–89; Pertile L., "Paradiso: A Drama of Desire", in Barnes J.C. – Petrie J. (eds.), Word and Drama in Dante: Essays on the Divina Commedia (Dublin: 1993) 143–180; and La punta del disio: semantica del desiderio nella Commedia (Florence: 2005); Lombardi, The Syntax of Desire 121–174.

it by means of experience and desire. Throughout the journey, several deviant desires are met and overcome - among which Francesca's 'sweet' but misplaced erotic desire in Inferno 5 and Ulysses' 'mad flight' powered by the desire for knowledge in Inferno 26 stand out. Dante's lesson, profusely administered at the centre of the *Purgatorio* (cantos 16–19), is that misplaced desire, or desire which is uneven with respect to its object, is the essence of sin, whereas desire with a direction is the essence of salvation. Beatrice's reproach at the top of Purgatory picks up where the Vita Nuova left off, with her death. It confirms the notion that bodies are signs in the discourse of desire; beautiful limbs are displayed not for the lover's pleasure, but to indicate the existence of a higher discourse of desire; they are there to instruct the lover that no terrestrial object of desire is ever eternal, and that each object needs to be overcome and considered in its 'discursive' mode, wherein its meaning resides. Desire in Dante and in the medieval Christian tradition is what makes the self aware of the existence of the other (which is ultimately a mere trace of the Other), triggers the search for it, and eventually – if correctly employed – joins the self to God.

Petrarch inherits this long discourse of medieval desire through his close familiarity with poetic and theological texts, especially Augustine's oeuvre. The theme of the 'right path' soon becomes fragmented into several contradictory 'right paths': one leads to woman; another leads to God; yet another leads to poetic glory. Desire loses its fixed aim and gains freedom. In the process, the other/Other vanishes, and the self acquires an increased self-awareness.

In sonnet 16, "Movesi il vecchierel canuto a bianco", Petrarch quite clearly appropriates and mocks the theme of the pilgrimage of desire, likening the desire of the pilgrim toward the Veronica (as a sign for Christ) to his following other women in search for Laura's desired true form.

et viene a Roma, seguendo 'l desio, per mirar la sembianza di colui ch'ancor lassú nel ciel vedere spera: cosí, lasso, talor vo cerchand'io, donna, quanto è possibile, in altrui la disiata vostra forma vera.¹⁴

¹⁴ 'And he comes to Rome, following his desire, to gaze on the likeness of Him whom he hopes to see again up there in Heaven. Thus, alas, at times I go searching in others, Lady, as much as it is possible, your longed-for true form.'

As Charles Singleton first showed, the likening of Beatrice to Christ is one of the key strategies of Dante's Vita Nuova, which affords Beatrice a very crucial and special role in the poet's pilgrimage of desire and journey of conversion.¹⁵ Petrarch, as John Freccero has pointed out, turns the process of conversion and the role of woman therein into a form of idolatry. Instead of pointing to a higher spiritual meaning, Laura is treated as a pure and absolute signifier, idolatrous because self-referential.¹⁶ The construction of this simile further proves Freccero's argument. Although the comparison between Laura and Christ appears at first sight formulaic. Petrarch meddles with the terms. Laura is not a sign of a transcendental referent (like the Veronica is for Christ), but she becomes the transcendental reference herself (she is likened to Christ as God, not Christ as man). While the Veronica is an image/sign of the face of Christ pointing toward God and meaning in heaven, other women's faces and bodies point to yet another face and body, thus creating a self-referential – idolatrous and physically embodied – system of signs. In Augustinian terms, the desire for Laura inhabits the space of fruition, as opposed to the space of use.

Even in the texts in which Laura is most often featured in a 'Beatrice mode', which is not uncommon in the second part of the collection (traditionally known as 'in morte'), her beautiful and scattered body is always recalled in her mortal form, ¹⁷ and even the most transcendental

¹⁵ Singleton C.S., Journey to Beatrice (Cambridge: 1958). For the relevance of Beatrice in the Canzoniere see Sturm-Maddox S., Petrarch's Metamorphoses: Text and Subtext in the Rime Sparse (Columbia: 1985) 39–94.

¹⁶ Freccero, "The Fig Tree and the Laurel".

¹⁷ See, for instance, 359 (56–66), where Laura appears to the poet holding a laurel and a palm, and indicates the way to salvation: 'Son questi i capei biondi et l' aureo nodo/dich' io ch' ancor mi stringe, e quei belli occhi/ che fur mio sol? Non errar con li sciocchi,/ né parlar dice o creder a lor modo:/ spirito ignudo sono, e 'n ciel mi godo;/ quel che tu cerchi è terra già molt' anni;/ ma per trarti d' affanni/ m' è dato a parer tale; ed anchor quella/ sarò, piú che mai bella,/ a te piú cara, sí selvaggia e pia,/ salvando inseme tua salute e mia' ("Is this the blond hair and the golden knot" say I "that still binds me and those beautiful eyes that were my sun?" "Do not err with fools nor speak" she says "or believe in their manner: I am a naked spirit, and rejoice in Heaven: what you seek has been dust for many years now. But to help you from your troubles it is given to me to seem such, and I shall be so again, more beautiful than ever, and more loving to you, once so wild and kind, saving at once your salvation and my own"'). And consider also the irony embedded in the 'anzi' (meaning 'rather/on the contrary') rhetoric in 275: 'Occhi miei, oscurato è 'l nostro Sole,/ anzi è salito al cielo ed ivi splende' ('My eyes, darkened is our sun, rather it has risen to heaven and there shines') and 277: 'Imaginata guida la conduce,/ ché la vera è sotterra, anzi è nel cielo' ('An imagined guide is leading him, for the true one is on the earth; rather she is in Heaven').

tension of disembodied desire results in an ironical 'dumping' of the poet/lover back on earth, as in 302:

Levommi il mio penser in parte ov' era quella ch' io cerco, et non ritrovo in terra: ivi, fra lor che 'l terzo cerchio serra, la rividi piú bella et meno altera.

Per man mi prese, e disse: In questa spera sarai anchor meco, se 'l desir non erra: i' so' colei che ti die' tanta guerra e compie' mia giornata inanzi sera.

Mio ben non cape in intelletto umano: te solo aspetto, e quel che tanto amasti e là giuso è rimaso, il mio bel velo.

Deh perché tacque, et allargò la mano? ch' al suon de' detti sí pietosi et casti poco mancò ch' io non rimasi in cielo.¹⁸

There are many Dantesque elements in this poem, and it even appears to be a rewriting of the last sonnet of the *Vita Nuova*, 'Oltre la spera che più larga gira' ('Beyond the sphere that makes the widest round'): the poet's thoughts rising toward heaven; the woman's beauty being increased by blessedness; the steadiness of transcendental desire; blessedness being beyond human understanding (also the topic of the fourth canto of the *Paradiso*); the woman's beautiful body being 'dust on earth'; and the promise of resurrection.¹⁹ Yet all these elements are

¹⁸ 'My thought lifted me up to where she was whom I seek and do not find on earth; there, among those whom the third circle encloses, I saw her more beautiful and less proud. She took me by the hand and said: "In this sphere you will be with me, if my desire is not deceived; I am she who gave you so much war and completed my days before evening. My blessedness no human intellect can comprehend: I only wait for you and for that which you loved so much and which remains down there, my lovely veil." Ah, why did she then become still and open her hand? For the sound of words so kind and chaste, I almost remained in Heaven.' In line 6 the translator takes the non-wandering desire ('se 'l desir non erra') to be solely Laura's. The Italian text, however, is vaguer, and it could easily refer to the poet's desire, or to both.

¹⁹ Compare to *Vita Nuova* 41, 1–13, in particular to the final sonnet: 'Oltre la spera che più larga gira/ passa 'l sospiro ch'esce del mio core:/ intelligenza nova, che l'Amore/ piangendo mette in lui, pur su lo tira/ Quand'elli è giunto là dove disira,/ vede una donna, che riceve onore,/ e luce sì, che per lo suo splendore/ lo peregrino spirito la mira./ Vedela tal, che quando 'l mi ridice,/ io no lo intendo, sì parla sottile/ al cor dolente, che lo fa parlare./ So io che parla di quella gentile,/ però che spesso ricorda Beatrice,/ sì ch'io lo 'ntendo ben, donne mie care' ('Beyond the sphere that makes the widest round, passes the sigh arisen from my heart; a new intelligence that Love in tears endowed it with is urging it on high. Once arrived at the place of its

disavowed by the lovers' inability to 'cling' to the narrative of love and language ('tacque, ed allargò la mano'), and the result is a relapse into earthly desperation.

Desire, initially featured as the Christian redemptive strategy, is turned into a desperate tension toward something unattainable, more akin to the classic desiderium. In Latin antiquity, desiderium refers to dead people. Its first meaning is pain and regret for something or somebody that no longer exists and is forever lost.²⁰ Its etymological root – de sideribus (from the stars) - implies that the origin of this regret is located in the 'other' world, in a transcendental space, as opposed to the terrestrial space of human existence. However, the remote cause of the regret 'coming from the stars' is situated in the very terrestrial and bodily space that it seems to bypass: it has to do with the disappearance of a tangible sign - namely, a body. In antiquity the communication between the two worlds is severed: desire indicates an irreplaceable loss. *Desiderium* conveys a passive notion of desire, as opposed to the active studium and appetitus. It condenses within itself the physical and intellectual aspects of desire: on the one hand, it is related to the body (it is, indeed, a desire for a body); on the other hand, since that body is lost, unattainable, or forever concealed, desire is forced to become a purely intellectual notion.

As a humanist, Petrarch re-appropriated and emphasized classical conceptions and roles of desire. If Dante is Petrarch's silent antagonist in the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*, Ovid is the audible protagonist of many parts of it. The work of the Augustan poet provides, for instance, the foundational myth of the *Canzoniere* – the story of Apollo and Daphne, the first major love transformation in the *Metamorphoses* (1, 452–567). The narrative of the God in his furious and desperate pursuit of the nymph, who shuns him to the point of praying to be turned into some-

desiring it sees a lady held in reverence, splendid in light; and through her radiance the pilgrim spirit looks upon her being. But when it tries to tell me what it saw, I cannot understand the subtle words it speaks to the sad heart that makes it speak. I know it tells of that most gracious one, for I often hear the name of Beatrice. This much, at least, is clear to me, dear ladies'). Text and translation (by M. Musa) are taken from the online Princeton Dante Project.

²⁰ When discussing disorder ('perturbatio') in book IV of the *Tusculanae disputationes*, Cicero defines desire as such: 'desiderium libido eius, quod nondum adsit, videndi' (IV, 9), ('longing is the lust of beholding someone who is not present'). Text and translation taken from *Tusculan Disputations*, transl. J.E. King (Cambridge: 1927).

thing repulsive; the quasi-touch between the lover and the object of his desire in the moment of metamorphosis; and the objectification of erotic desire into poetry (the crown of laurel, which becomes the symbol of loss and poetry): such details instil the collection of lyrics with a notion of desire that is unrestrained and irrestrainable, unfulfilled and unfulfillable. Moreover, in the *Canzoniere* the Apollo and Daphne myth solidifies the key connection between desire and poetry. Even more performatively than Daphne, Laura/laurel frustrates the conjunction with the lover by being turned into poetry.²¹

This Ovidian subtext of desire and writing (or, indeed, of desire *as* writing) is programmatically summarized in "Apollo s'anchor vive il bel desio", which is now known as sonnet 34 but was initially (1342) the *Canzoniere*'s proemial text.

Apollo, s'anchor vive il bel desio che t'infiammava a le thesaliche onde, e se non ài l'amate chiome bionde, volgendo gli anni, già poste in oblio;

dal pigro gielo et dal tempo aspro et rio, che dura quanto 'l tuo viso s'asconde, difendi or l'onorata et sacra fronde, ove tu prima, et poi fu' invescato io;

et per vertù de l'amorosa speme, che ti sostenne ne la vita acerba, di queste impression' l'aere disgombra.

Sì vedrem poi per meraviglia inseme seder la Donna nostra sopra l'erba et far de le sue braccia a se stessa ombra.²²

²¹ For the Apollo and Daphne theme in the *Canzoniere* see Cottino-Jones M., "The Myth of Apollo and Daphne in Petrarch's *Canzoniere*: The Dynamics and Literary Function of Transformation", in Scaglione A. (ed.), *Francis Petrarch: Six Centuries Later* (Chapel Hill: 1975) 152–176; Hainsworth P.R.J., "The Myth of Daphne in the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*", *Italian Studies* 34 (1979) 28–44; Sturm-Maddox, *Petrarch's Metamorphoses* 9–38; and Bolland A., "Desiderio and Diletto: Vision, Touch, and the Poetics of Bernini's Apollo and Daphne", *The Online Art Bulletin* (June 2000, www.collegeart.org/artbulletin/2_2000html).

²² 'Apollo, if the sweet desire is still alive that inflamed you beside the Thessalian waves, and if you have not forgotten, with the turning of the years, those beloved blond locks; against the slow frost and the harsh cruel time that lasts as long as your face is hidden, now defend the honored and holy leaves where you first and then I were limed; and by the power of the amorous hope that sustained you in your bitter life, disencumber the air of this impression. Thus we shall then together see a marvel—our lady sitting on the grass and with her arms making a shade for herself.'

In what is possibly the first structural conception of the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*, 'desire' was inscribed in the very first line of the collection.²³ More importantly, this 'desio' is both the peak of desire, the one that inflamed Apollo at the very end of his pursuit, near the river where Daphne sees her wish of being turned into a tree fulfilled ('che t'infiammava a le tesaliche onde') and a very fleeting type of desire, which might indeed have already been overcome by oblivion ('s'anchor vive'). The proemial strength of this sonnet lies in the identification between the poet and Apollo, and in the translation of the object of desire (Daphne, Laura, laurel) from the erotic realm into the poetic realm. The object of desire and poetry is cast as narcissistic, all wrapped up in itself, as the repetition of 'her' and 'herself' in the final line testifies: 'far de le sue braccia a se stessa ombra'.

The sonnet which takes the place of "Apollo s'anchor vive" in the subsequent arrangements of the collection is much more Augustinian and Dantesque in spirit, as it at least hints at the existence of an orderly narrative behind the scattered parts.

Voi ch'ascoltate in rime sparse il suono di quei sospiri ond'io nudriva 'l core in sul mio primo giovenile errore, quand'era in parte altr'uom da quel ch' i' sono,

del vario stile in ch'io piango et ragiono, fra le vane speranze e 'l van dolore, ove sia chi per prova intenda amore, spero trovar pietà, nonché perdono.

Ma ben veggio or sí come al popol tutto favola fui gran tempo, onde sovente di me mesdesmo meco mi vergogno;

e del mio vaneggiar vergogna è 'l frutto, e 'l pentersi, e 'l conoscer chiaramente che quanto piace al mondo è breve sogno.²⁴

²³ The existence of the first 'form' of the *Canzoniere* has been much debated. It was proposed by Wilkins E.H., *The Making of the 'Canzoniere' and other Petrarchan Studies* (Rome: 1951) and refuted by Rico F., "*Rime Sparse/Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*. Para el titulo y el primer soneto del *Canzoniere*", *Medioevo Romanzo* 3 (1976) 101–138. Recent scholarship tends to subscribe Wilkins' idea of the existence of the 1342 collection. See Santagata M., *I frammenti dell'anima. Storia e racconto nel Canzoniere di Petrarca* (Bologna: 1992) 137–142.

²⁴ You who hear in scattered rhymes the sound of those sighs with which I nourished my heart during my first youthful error, when I was in part another man from what I am now: for the varied style in which I weep and speak between vain hopes

"Voi ch'ascoltate" (1350) implies a process of conversion ('quand'era in parte altr'uom da quel ch' i' sono'), addresses the reader as an *exem-plum*, recalls in a quasi formulaic way the theme of *vanitas mundi* ('che quanto piace al mondo è breve sogno'), and recasts desire as 'errore' – the mistake that makes one wander away from the right path. Style and poetry are still very much at the centre of this poem – they take, indeed, the place of desire in the first line of the collection. Poems are 'sparse', scattered, like Laura's limbs in canzone 126 and in several other poems. Narcissism is now transferred to the poet (and subject of desire), albeit in a self-reproaching way ('di me medesmo meco mi vergogno').

Another poem that carries a strong imprint of the Apollo and Daphne myth is sonnet 6, the only poem in the collection exclusively dedicated to the characterization of desire.

Sí traviato è 'l folle mi' desio a seguitar costei che 'n fuga è volta, e de' lacci d'Amor leggiera et sciolta vola dinanzi al lento correr mio,

che quanto richiamando più l'envio per la secura strada, men m'ascolta: né mi vale spronarlo, o dargli volta, ch'Amor per sua natura il fa restio.

Et poi che 'l fren per forza a sé raccoglie, i' mi rimango in signoria di lui, che mal mio grado a morte mi trasporta:

sol per venir al lauro onde si coglie acerbo frutto, che le piaghe altrui, gustando afflige piú che non conforta.²⁵

and vain sorrow, where there is anyone who understands love through experience, I hope to find pity, not only pardon. But now I see well how for a long time I was the talk of the crowd, for which often I am ashamed of myself within; and of my raving, shame is the fruit, and repentance, and the clear knowledge that whatever pleases the world is a brief dream.'

²⁵ 'So far astray is my mad desire, in pursuing her who has turned in flight and, light and free of the snares of Love, flies ahead of my slow running, that when, calling him back, I most send him by the safe path, then he least obeys me, nor does it help to spur him or turn him, for Love makes him restive by nature; and when he takes the bit forcefully to himself, I remain in his power, as against my will he carries me off to death; only to come to the laurel whence one gathers bitter fruit that, being tasted, afflicts one's wounds more than it comforts them.'

Within the Ovidian framework of the woman's flight and the lover's/ poet's pursuit, desire is characterized as led astray ('traviato') and mad ('folle', vet another heavily Dantesque word) and, throughout the poem, it is compared to an unbridled horse who ignores the feeble attempts of his master to lead him toward the right path, thereby leading him to death instead ('che mal mio grado a morte mi trasporta'). Desire's nature, bestowed on it by Love, is beautifully described as 'resti[a]', restive. The object of desire - the fleeing woman - is eventually characterized as the bitter fruit of the laurel, thereby conflating the theme of desire for woman with that of poetic glory. As commentators have noted, the image of the restive horse is a standard characterization of a passion that needs to be 'reined in', and commonly appears in both the classics and the medieval romance tradition, in theological as well as poetic texts.²⁶ It is found, for instance, both in Ovid's Amores – where the unrestrained horse is compared to the 'wind of lust' carrying the poet away – and in Dante's *Convivio*, to illustrate the relations between reason (the horseman) and passion (the restive horse).²⁷

Petrarch employs this traditional image in order to point out desire's contradictory features and the horseman's powerlessness, as the staged contrast between sonnets 47 and 48 shows. In 47, desire is the (temporarily) docile horse the master governs in order to be lead back to

²⁶ For this sonnet and the theme of the unbridled horse in the *Canzoniere*, see in particular Noferi A., "Note ad un sonetto del Petrarca", *Forum Italicum* 2 (1968) 194–205; Velli G., *Petrarca e Boccaccio. Tradizione memoria e riscrittura* (Padua: 1979) 44–46; Sturm-Maddox, *Petrarch's Metamorphoses*, 80–86.

²⁷ See *Amores* 2, 9b, 29–35: 'ut rapit in praeceps dominum spumantia frustra/ frena retentantem durior oris equus;/ ut subitus, prope iam prensa tellure, carinam/ tangentem portus ventus in alta rapit -/ sic me saepe refert incerta Cupidinis aura,/ notaque purpureus tela resumit Amor' ('As a hard-mouthed horse bears headlong in flight the master who strives in vain to hold him back with foaming bit; as on a sudden, when land is now all but gained and the keel is touching the haven, the winds sweeps out to deep – so I am oft carried away again by the veering gale of Cupid, and bright love takes up again the weapons I know so well'). Translations are taken from Ovid, Heroides and Amores, transl. G. Showerman (Cambridge: 1977). And see Convivio iv.26, 6: Veramente questo appetito conviene essere cavalcato dalla ragione; ché sì come uno sciolto cavallo, quanto ch'ello sia di natura nobile, per sé, sanza lo buono cavalcatore, bene non si conduce, così questo appetito, che irascibile e concupiscibile si chiama, quanto ch'ello sia nobile, alla ragione obedire conviene, la quale guida quello con freno e con isproni, come buono cavaliere' ('Nevertheless this appetite must be ridden by reason, for just as a horse set loose, however noble it may be by nature, cannot act as its own guide without a good rider, so the appetite, which is called irascible or concupiscible, however noble it may be, must obey reason, which guides it with bridle and spurs like a good horseman'). Text and translation (by R. Lansing) are taken from the online Princeton Dante project.

the right path (the way is 'smarrita' like in Dante), that is toward his love for the woman. Desire must be acknowledged and followed, if one wants to avoid death:

Io sentia dentr' al cor già venir meno gli spirti che da voi ricevon vita, et perché natural-mente s' aita contra la morte ogni animal terreno,

largai 'l desio, che i' teng' or molto a freno, e misil per la via quasi smarrita; però che dí e notte indi m'invita, ed io contra sua voglia altronde 'l meno.

Et mi condusse vergognoso e tardo a riveder gli occhi leggiadri, ond' io, per non esser lor grave, assai mi guardo.

Vivrommi un tempo omai, ch' al viver mio tanta virtute à sol un vostro sguardo, e poi morrò, s' io non credo al desio.²⁸

In the sonnet that follows, Petrarch discusses the paradox of excessive desire, which accomplishes the opposite of its aim, resulting in a diminishment of itself. Desire is characterized as a deafening cascade, a blinding sun, and an impetuous yet inefficient horse. In this scenario desire is uneven ('non s'accorda') with respect to its object, which becomes the unbridled/unchecked element ('sfrenato'), and the pursuit, cast as a flight ('la fuga'), is slowed down by excessive spurring.²⁹

²⁸ 'I felt already failing within my heart the spirits that received life from you; and, since every earthly animal defends itself against death, I let loose my desire, which now I hold tightly reined in and I sent it off on the way that is almost lost (because night and day it calls me there, and I against its will lead it elsewhere), and it led me, late and ashamed, to see your lovely eyes, which I avoid in order not to pain them. I shall live on a short time now, since one glance of yours has so much power in my life; and then I shall die, unless I obey my desire.'

²⁹ Two more texts in the *Canzoniere* are worth pointing at for the horse/desire theme. The desire of a horse is called 'gentile' (sic), one of the very few positive connotations of desire in the whole collection, in sonnet 98 where Petrarch consoles his friend Orso D'Anguillara for not being able to take part in a tournament. Sonnet 236 is a variation on the theme of excessive desire: 'Amor, io fallo, e veggio il mio fallire,/ ma fo sì com'uom ch'arde e 'l foco à 'n seno;/ ché 'l duol pur cresce, et la ragion ven meno/ et è già quasi vinta dal martire./ Solea frenare il mio caldo desire,/ per non turbare il bel viso sereno:/ non posso piú, di man m'ài tolto il freno,/ e l' alma desperando à preso ardire;/ però, s'oltra suo stile ella s'aventa,/ tu 'l fai, che sì l'accendi e sì la sproni,/ ch' ogni aspra via per sua salute tenta;/ et più 'l fanno i

Forse, sí come 'l Nil d'alto caggendo col gran suono i vicin d'intorno assorda, e 'l sole abbaglia chi ben fiso 'l guarda, cosí 'l desio, che seco non s'accorda, ne lo sfrenato obietto vien perdendo; e per troppo spronar la fuga è tarda.³⁰

Desire is mostly a negative force in the *Canzoniere*. A cursory analysis of its recurrence in the collection shows that desire is mostly (and predictably) featured as large ('gran disio', 71, 117, 119, 140, 147, 167, 312) and hot – by turns appearing lit, burning and fire-like ('caldo', 127, 280; 'acceso', 143; 'ardente', 17, 113, 'arde', 149; 'foco', 133). It is led astray ('traviato', 6), mad ('folle', 6, 19), blind ('cieco', 56), fierce ('fero', 62), excessive ('soverchio', 70), incontestable ('incontrastabile', 71) and powerful ('possente', 161). It is sweet only when mentioned oxymoronically, paired up with death (323) or crying (332). Twice it is beautiful ('bel disio', 25, 34), but in those instances it is not the poet's desire, but rather the desire of a friend and of Apollo, respectively. Just once is it blessed (61), albeit together with sighs and tears. Pacification or fulfilment is rarely in sight, and when they are a possibility, it is either very momentary (17) or coupled with consumption and sighs (163). Desire has ambiguous and often conflicting relations to fear (147), pain (155), pleasure (181), suspicion (182), mercy (241) and, especially, hope (73, 85, 94, 181, 191, 267, 270, 277, 290). This last association, due to its religious implication, is the most intricate and contradictory of all.31

celesti e rari doni/ ch'à in sé madonna: or fa' almen ch'ella il senta/ e le mie colpe a se stessa perdoni' ('Love, I transgress and I see my transgression, but I act like a man who burns with a fire in his breast; for the pain still grows, and my reason fails and it is almost overcome by sufferings. I used to rein in my hot desire so as not to darken her clear face; I can no longer do it: you have taken the reins from my hand, and my despairing soul has acquired boldness. Therefore, if my soul hazards herself beyond her usual style, you are doing it – who so inflame and spur her that she attempts every difficult way toward her salvation – and even more those heavenly, rare gifts which my lady has. Now at least I make her perceive it, and make her pardon herself for my transgressions').

^{'30} 'Perhaps as the Nile, falling from on high, with its great noise deafens those who dwell nearby, and as the sun dazzles him who looks on it fixedly, thus desire, which keeps no proportions with itself, is lost in an object too immense, and through too much spurring flight is slowed.'

³¹ The intricate connections between desire and hope in the *Canzoniere* would require an essay for themselves. For the purposes of this essay, it suffices to compare two texts such as canzone 73 and sonnet 85. In 73, the relation between desire and

Desire is a tripartite entity in the *Canzoniere* – even Trinitarian, one is tempted to say, in that the main form of desire, the poet's desire for Laura, generates two offshoots of itself: desire for poetic expression and desire for poetic glory. The two derivations are coextensive to the originator in the equation Laura-lauro – the laurel standing for both the Apollonian poetry ingrained in the loss of the woman and the prize bestowed upon such poetry, the laurel crown.

Moreover, the question of desire in the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* is recognizably paradoxical, as it always involves antithetical aspects. Desire is clearly described as obsessive, remaining fixated on a single object for years on end, as is noted throughout the collection by the so-called anniversary poems, and as made explicit, for instance, in sonnet 168:

Or sia che pò: già sol io non invecchio; già per etate il mio desir non varia: ben temo il viver breve che n' avanza.³²

At the same time it is an errant (and erratic), fragmentary kind of desire, often losing focus with regard to both its aim and its intensity, as shown, for instance, in sonnet 178:

or alto or basso il meo cor lasso mena, onde 'l vago desir perde la traccia e 'l suo sommo piacer per che li spiaccia: d' error sí novo la mia mente è piena.³³

Desire is mobile and swift ('ratto', 18), growing and rising ('monta e cresce', 57), revolving and mutating within itself ('cangirsi ogni desire', 115) but also steady ('fermo', 22) and unwavering over time ('antichi

hope is characterized as the theological *poena damni* (the punishment of loss, the underlying torment of Hell and Purgatory) with an almost literal quotation from Dante's *Inferno* (4, 42: 'senza speme vivemo in disio' ['without hope we live in longing']]: 'Lasso, che disiando/ vo quel ch'esser non puote in alcun modo,/ e vivo del desir fuor di speranza' ('Alas, I go desiring what cannot be in any way, and I live on my desire out of hope'). In 85, desire and hope feed on each other and defy death: 'Amor, con quanto sforzo oggi mi vinci!/ et se non ch' al desio cresce la speme,/ i' cadrei morto, ove più viver bramo' ('Love, with what power today you vanquish me! And, except that hope increases with desire, I would fall dead, where I most desire to live').

³² 'Now come what will: I am not the only one who is growing old, and my desire does not vary at all with age; but I do fear that what remains of life may be short.'

³³ 'Now high now low it [Love] leads my weary heart; wherefore my wandering desire loses the trace and seems displeased by its dearest pleasure, full of such strange error is my mind.'

desiri', 118). It appears 'changed' ('i cambiati desiri'), as an indicator of an alleged conversion, only in the last text, the so-called *Canzone alla Vergine* ('Song to the Virgin'), which is famously discordant with the rest of the collection in light of its religious inspiration.

Another ambivalent aspect of desire in the *Canzoniere* is that of the object of desire's presence or absence. On the one hand, desire functions very much *in presentia* of the beloved, as it is fuelled by her physical appearance, and especially the contemplation of her face; on the other, it is a very reflexive/self-reflexive feeling, which feeds on her absence and in turn fuels poetry. To use Petrarch's own words, desire is what 'forces me to speak' (125, 43–44: 'il disir mi mena a dire').³⁴ Petrarch develops the dynamics of presence and absence to their extreme, in very nuanced, refined reflections. Moreover, this dynamic is complicated by the self-referential quality of the object of desire. Through an apparatus of veils and mirrors Laura withdraws herself even *in praesentia*, and, by recalling her own desire toward herself (46, 'veggendo in voi finir vostro desio'), she both rejects and enflames the poet's desire.³⁵

Finally, one of the most interesting qualities of Petrarchan desire is that it is embodied. Whether in presence or absence, desire always fails to relinquish the signifier; it is permanently 'made flesh' in the real or imagined woman's limbs, as the analysis of the Veronica sonnet has shown. Similarly, the poet/lover is invariably one with his desire. In sonnet 18, we see the poet trying to drop his desire, but to no avail:

³⁴ For the connections between desire, absence and poetry, see in particular Noferi A., "Il canzoniere del Petrarca: Scrittura del desiderio e desiderio della scrittura", *Paragone* 296 (1974) 3–24, and Mazzotta G., *The Worlds of Petrarch* (Durham: 1993).

³⁵ See, for instance, the wavering of desire in 11: 'Lassare il velo o per sole o per ombra,/ donna, non vi vid'io/ poi che in me conosceste il gran desio/ ch'ogni altra voglia d'entr'al cor mi sgombra./ Mentr'io portava i be' pensier' celati,/ ch'ànno la mente desiando morta,/ vidivi di pietate ornare il volto;/ ma poi ch'Amor di me vi fece accorta,/ fuor i biondi capelli allor velati,/ e l'amoroso sguardo in sé raccolto./ Quel ch' i' piú desiava in voi m'è tolto:/ sí mi governa il velo,/ che per mia morte, et al caldo et al gielo,/ de' be' vostr'occhi il dolce lume adombra' ('Lady, I have never seen you put aside your veil for sun or for shadow since you knew the great desire in me that lightens my heart at all other wishes. While I carried my lovely thoughts hidden [with desire they are bringing death into my heart] I saw you adorn your face with pity; but since Love has made you aware of me, your blond hair has been veiled and your lovely gaze kept to itself. What I most desired in you has been taken from me; thus the veil controls me and to cause my death shades the sweet light of your lovely eyes in both warm and icy weather').

Cosí davanti ai colpi de la morte fuggo, ma non sí ratto, che 'l desio meco non venga, come venir sòle.³⁶

In sestina 22 Petrarch inscribes and modifies the classical etymology of desire by relating it to his own body: 'ché, bench' i' sia mortal corpo di terra,/ lo mi fermo desir vien da le stelle' ('for though I am a body of this earth, my firm desire comes from the stars'). Desire 'comes from the stars', but as such (or; as a predestined characteristic as this line is often interpreted) it becomes the fundamental constituent of the lover's self – indeed, his very soul, as M. Santagata suggests.³⁷ The new Petrarchan self is made of desire and body, as opposed to body and soul.

In sonnet 88, yet another meditation on the theme of the horse, desire is said to have affected even the poet's body: 'e fuggo ancor cosí debile e zoppo/ da l'un de' lati, ove 'l desio m'à storto' ('and I do flee now, even if so weak and lame on one side where desire has twisted me'). Finally, in Canzone 264, "Io vo pensando" – the text which opens the second part of the collection and parades the poet's discordant and conflicting thoughts – desire (for poetic glory) is described as a quintessential part of the poet, somehow superior to (or governing) his body's physiology. The poet and his desire are one from birth to death, and will be separated only when body and soul finally part (54–67).³⁸

Da l'altra parte un pensier dolce et agro con faticosa et dilectevol salma sedendosi entro l'alma, preme 'l cor di desio, di speme il pasce; che sol per fama gloriosa et alma non sente quand' io agghiaccio, o quand' io flagro,

³⁶ 'Thus I flee before the blows of death, but not so quickly that my desire does not come with me, as it is accustomed.'

³⁷ Canzoniere, ed. M. Santagata (Milan: 1996) 91.

³⁸ On the contrary, in sonnet 277, where the dead Laura is imagined in a very Dantesque mode as a guide, the body appears to be an impediment (a 'veil') to the perception of the 'longed-for light': 'Imaginata guida la conduce,/ ché la vera è sotterra, anzi è nel cielo,/ onde piú che mai chiara al cor traluce:/ agli occhi no, ch'un doloroso velo/ contende lor la disiata luce' ('An imagined guide is leading him, for the true one is on the earth; rather she is in Heaven, whence she shines through even more brightly to my heart, not to my eyes, for a sorrowful veil robs them of the light they desire').

s' i' son pallido o magro; e s' io l'occido, più forte rinasce. Questo d' allor ch' i' m' addormiva in fasce venuto è di dí in dí crescendo meco, e temo ch' un sepolcro ambeduo chiuda. Poi che fia l' alma de le membra ignuda, non pò questo desio piú venir seco.³⁹

In conclusion, in the Canzoniere Petrarch elaborates a very original, nuanced, and 'modern' concept of desire, through the appropriation, in ironical terms, of the Augustinian/Dantean narrative of the 'order of desire' and the re-evaluation of a classical/Ovidian notion of desire – an idea of desire as creative chaos, unattainable pursuit and ineluctable loss. The 'modern' concept of desire in Petrarch's Canzoniere derives from the poet's editing the medieval (and, specifically, Dantean) discourse of desire with the help of the classical understanding of the theme. This strategy shows the nature of Petrarch's medievalism: the new discourse is generated by establishing a dialogue between the passing tradition and its past, by 'unleashing' the philologically restored 'trahit sua quemque voluptas' on the Augustinian doctrine of the order of love, which sprang forth from the domestication of the classical conception of desire as chaos. Through the popularity of Petrarchism in early modern and modern lyric poetry, Petrarch's discourse of desire becomes the discourse of (poetic) desire as we have come to know it: obsessive, narcissistic, and crucial to the establishment of the authorial self.

If desire in Dante can be described as a drive toward the other (woman and/or God), Petrarchan desire can be defined as a resistance that both creates and reveals the self. Desire in the *Canzoniere* is intransitive: it does not trace a journey toward the other/Other, nor points to it, nor reveals her/His existence. It is instead characterized as a permanent, constitutive lack – one that consistently verges on a loss. As such, it is a fundamental constituent of the embodied self, a self that

³⁹ 'On the other side a sweet sharp thought, enthroned within my soul in difficult and delightful weight, oppresses my heart with desire and feeds it with hope; for the sake of kindly glorious fame, it does not feel when I freeze or when I flame, or if I am pale or thin; and if I kill it, it is reborn stronger than before. This thought has been growing with me day by day since I slept in swaddling clothes, and I fear that one tomb will enclose us both; for when my soul is naked of my members, this desire will not be able to come with it.'

ends up being made solely of desire and (poetic) language – a 'modern' subject we are very familiar with, since it was brought into the spotlight by psychoanalysis many centuries later. Indeed the *Canzoniere* seems to anachronistically verify Roland Barthes' meditation on the discourse of love as necessarily lonely, fragmentary and citational.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ Barthes R., Fragments d'un discours amoureux (Paris: 1977).

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MEDIEVALISMS IN LATIN LOVE POETRY OF THE EARLY ITALIAN QUATTROCENTO*

Christoph Pieper

The following reflections on three authors, Giovanni Marrasio, Cristoforo Landino and Tito Vespasiano Strozzi, are examples illustrating a *tradizione negata*. Humanistic poets did not talk explicitly about medieval influence on the poetry of their time. Instead, they wanted their poetry to be inserted into a lexical, syntactic and semantic repertoire of ancient poetry that, according to the dominant poetics of imitation, formed the background for any literary critique of their works. Nevertheless, I suggest that medieval tradition played a certain role at least in some of the early collections of the Quattrocento – if not throughout the century. Early poets especially employed medievalisms to negotiate their own poetic position and to present themselves as conscious of the tradition in which they were writing and from which they might want to deviate.

Furthermore, I hope to show that nearly every medievalism is filtered through the two main discourses which form the framework of humanistic love-poetry: the Roman elegists and Petrarch's *Canzoniere*. Medieval poetics are dependent on ancient *auctoritates* and especially the commentary tradition of late antiquity from which they extract general rules for describing and prescribing. Petrarch's poems themselves are also not imaginable without their medieval predecessors. The complex situation in which different levels of traditions are interwoven into one another requires a cautious approach: How can we distinguish medievalisms from their classical fundaments? And are

^{*} I warmly thank Bettina Reitz (Leiden) for her patient help with this paper.

¹ Two central studies for the concept of *imitatio* in the Renaissance are Greene T.M., *The Light in Troy. Imitation and Discovery in Renaissance Poetry*, The Elizabethan Club Series 7 (New Haven: 1982) and McLaughlin M.L., *Literary Imitation in the Renaissance. The Theory and Practice of Literary Imitation in Italy from Dante to Bembo*, Oxford Modern Languages and Literature Monographs (Oxford: 1995). Still worth reading is the old study by Gmelin H., "Das Prinzip der Imitatio in den romanischen Literaturen der Renaissance", *Romanische Forschungen* 46 (1932) 83–360.

they, on the other hand, more than just (often less than subtle) a form of Petrarchism?

It will be helpful to summarize the main development of the literary concept of love as it was developed in the Middle Ages and in Petrarch's *Canzoniere*, before turning to the poetry of the Quattrocento itself.

Italian Love-poetry

Petrarch's Provençal predecessors, the *trobadors* writing about *fin'amors*, adapted the ancient elegiac concept of *servitium amoris* to the context of a literary culture situated at the feudal courts of local liege lords.² In the political system of the high Middle Ages, the singer usually courts a noble lady, by presenting himself as lower-class. This is demonstrated by the fact that she can give him orders which he then has to fulfil.³ Within the Italian tradition, which begins around 1220 at the Sicilian court of Frederic II of Hohenstaufen, the coordinates of love are shifted again. Here, the beloved lady is raised to the status of a woman stripped of a specific personality, a process that has convincingly been connected with the absolute and even religious emperorship claimed by Frederic for himself.⁴ According to Joachim Schulze, this process was supported by a concentration on the effects which love has on

² In Roman elegy, the poetic speaker takes on the role of a servant of his beloved although he is actually of higher social status than her. For a useful overview of elegiac characteristics see Stroh W., "Die Ursprünge der römischen Liebeselegie: Ein altes Problem im Licht eines neuen Fundes", *Poetica* 15 (1983) 205–246. Stroh suggests convincingly that the girl is presented as (noble) prostitute in most of the texts, whereas the lover is a member of the (cultural) upper class.

³ I am not entirely in agreement with the (old) views of Erich Köhler and his school, who argue that Provençal poetry narrowly represents the actual social status of the singer; cf. e.g. Rieger D., "Einleitung: Das trobadoreske Gattungssystem und sein Sitz im Leben", in Köhler E. – Mölk U. – Rieger D. (eds.), *Les genres lyriques*, vol. I, 3, Grundriß der romanischen Literaturen des Mittelalters (Heidelberg: 1987) 15–28. Among the critics of their position, one can cite Peters U., "Niederes Rittertum oder hoher Adel? Zu Erich Köhlers historisch-soziologischer Deutung der altprovenzalischen und mittelhochdeutschen Minnelyrik", *Euphorion* 67 (1973) 244–260. That the hierarchically structured feudal system, based on the reciprocity of loyal service and recompense, contributed to the success of the similarly structured *fin'amors*, still seems convincing to me.

⁴ Cf. Krauss H., "Gattungssystem und Sitz im Leben: Zur Rezeption der altprovenzalischen Lyrik in der sizilianischen Dichterschule", *Zeitschrift für französische Sprache und Literatur* 3 (1973) 37–70.

the personal feelings of the speaker.⁵ At the end of the thirteenth century, the northern Italian *stilnovisti* shaped *un'angelica figura*, an angelic woman far removed from any actual interaction with the loving singer. To describe the effects of love on the speaker's soul, the poets make use of contemporary philosophical debates. At the end of the process (in Dante's *Vita Nova* and the 'Paradiso' of his *Commedia*), even the death of the beloved lady does not prevent the poet/lover from sending her literary tokens of his constant love. The purely philosophical discourse is introduced into a Christian one, based on Thomas Aquinas's search for the philosophically proven divine truth. The beloved lady, Beatrice, functions as medium between God and Dante; she rewards him with mystic revelations and thus gives the final proof of her own divine nature.⁶

To summarize, love poetry in Italy at the dawn of the fourteenth century was religiously inspired and anything but a reflection on the speaker's actual love affairs. Moreover, it was a sublime expression of the speaker's attempt to gain God's mercy. It is Petrarch's achievement to maintain this religious foundation, but at the same time to continue the search for the effects love has on the psychology of the poetic lover. Petrarch incorporates his poetic collection into his life project of shaping the personality of a virtual author, the character of a perfect intellectual of his time, driven and tortured by contrastive stimuli such as the quest for earthly glory, the desire for inner peace in (religious) solitude, and the patriotism for his native Italy. Finally, Petrarch considered the revival of classical literature and art the basis of any cultural and political progress in Italy. The 366 vernacular poems collected in his Canzoniere symbolize the inner tensions of the persona Petrarch. Scholars have shown the fragmentation of the classical discourse of love and the consequent fragmentation of the lover's character: the depressed lover, the poet identified with Apollo, the lonely intellectual, the fervent patriot and the soul longing for God's

⁵ Cf. Schulze J., "Die sizilianische Wende der Lyrik", *Poetica* 11 (1979) 318–342. Schulze's position is evaluated by Bernsen M., *Die Problematisierung lyrischen Sprechens im Mittelalter. Eine Untersuchung zum Diskurswandel der Liebesdichtung von den Provenzalen bis zu Petrarca*, Zeitschrift für romanische Philologie/Beihefte 313 (Tübingen: 2001) 174–175.

⁶ Bernsen, *Die Problematisierung* 268 comments on this development: 'Sie [die Diskursivität der Liebesdichtung, CP] wird jedoch dadurch, daß Dante die einzelnen Perspektiven in einen analogen Bezug zur christlichen Wahrheit stellt, in ihrer Komplexität zugleich reduziert'.

relief are all aspects of the poetic speaker which are not developed chronologically, but are all present simultaneously from the beginning to the end of the collection. Even the final reversion to the Virgin Mary in canzone 366 is not free of erotic vocabulary and certainly no sign of final inner peace.⁷

To be able to widen the focus of the medieval *fin'amors*-poetry, Petrarch developed his metaphors with the help of a reappraisal of ancient literature (especially the Augustan elegists, Ovid and Propertius, and Horace's *Odes*).⁸ This makes the situation for our analysis more complex, as we are dealing with three models that are closely interwoven with each other: ancient literature is the venerable model of any poetry based on imitation; Petrarch's *volgare*-poetry is influenced by both this ancient tradition and medieval poetics; and these themselves cannot be looked at without reference to antiquity.

Petrarchism and Medievalism

Petrarch's *Canzoniere* influenced the discourse of love for at least three hundred years and has led modern interpreters to call it Petrarchism, after the name of its 'inventor'. This honour (that has been granted to very few authors in world literature) has surely led modern scholars to describe Petrarch as the first modern intellectual, as Karlheinz Stierle does in his recently published, huge, but problematic biography. In doing so, Stierle accepts Petrarch's own self-fashioning. He wanted to be the main representative of a new generation in the intellectual his-

⁷ Cf. Bernsen, *Die Problematisierung* 318: 'Doch auch dieser gegenüber Maria geäußerte Wunsch, wenigstens das letzte Lied möge Zeugnis einer christlichen Dichtung sein, findet keine Erfüllung'. For the contrasting position that the text expresses true religious feelings of penitence cf. e.g. Kablitz A., "'Era il giorno ch'al sol si scoloraro per la pietà del suo factore i rai': Zum Verhältnis von Sinnstruktur und poetischem Verfahren in Petrarcas Canzoniere", *Romanisches Jahrbuch* 39 (1988) 45–72, esp. 71.

⁸ Cf. Tonelli N., "I 'Rerum vulgarium fragmenta' e il codice elegiaco", in Comboni A. – Di Ricco A. (eds.), *L'elegia nella tradizione poetica italiana*, Labirinti 64 (Trento: 2003) 17–35.

⁹ Stierle K., Francesco Petrarca. Ein Intellektueller im Europa des 14. Jahrhunderts (Munich – Vienna: 2003). For a witty and substantial response to such a position (written on the occasion of an earlier, shorter publication by Stierle) cf. König B., "Petrarcas Landschaften. Philologische Bemerkungen zu einer neuen Deutung", Romanische Forschungen 92 (1980) 251–282.

tory of mankind – and therefore he had to look with contempt on the centuries before him. 10

For a long time, research on Petrarchism concentrated on vernacular poetry. As far as Latin erotic poetry of the Quattrocento is concerned, it is not surprising that we usually consider it as literature produced in an emulative process with antiquity. Ancient texts not only contribute linguistic patterns of the foreign language Latin, but also, according to the programmatic humanistic turn towards antiquity, modules of content on which the authors built their texts. Recently, however, critics have paid more attention to the fact that humanists writing in Latin from the very beginning also interacted with the tre corone Dante, Petrarch and Boccaccio as linguistic and ideological models for Italian and especially Tuscan humanism. The letter written by Coluccio Salutati after the death of Petrarch, or the fact that

¹⁰ Essential for Petrarch as the 'father of the concept or attitude which regards the Middle Ages as Dark Ages' has been the article by Mommsen T.E., "Petrarch's Conception of the 'Dark Ages'", *Speculum* 17 (1942) 226–242 (quotation 242).

This is in line with the first important book on Petrarchism by Vianey J., Le Pétrarquisme en France au XVF siècle (Montpellier: 1909). Most recently, William Kennedy presents Petrarchistic tendencies in the Italian Quattrocento and their political impact without mentioning the rich Latin tradition, cf. Kennedy W.J., The Site of Petrarchism. Early Modern National Sentiment in Italy, France, and England, Parallax. Revisions of Culture and Society (Baltimore – London: 2003) 23–73. Even in recent encyclopaedic articles, Latin Petrarchism plays a marginal role, if it is not completely ignored, for instance in The New Princeton Encyclopedia on Poetry and Poetic (Princeton: 1993) 902–904 (by Hardison O.B. – Fucilla J.G. – Kleinherz C.; short mention); Mougin P. – Haddad-Wotling K. (eds.), Larousse. Dictionnaire mondial des litératures (Paris: 2002) 679 (no reference). Cf., however, Foster L., "Petrarkismus und Neulatein", in Hempfer K. – Regn G. (eds.), Der petrarkistische Diskurs. Spielräume und Grenzen; Akten des Kolloquiums an der FU Berlin, 23.–27.10.1991, Text und Kontext 11 (Stuttgart: 1993) 165–185.

¹² The letter is written to Roberto Guidi, the Earl of Battifolle, on 16 August 1374 (as a direct reaction to Petrarch's death); see Novato F. (ed.), Epistolario di Coluccio Salutati, 4 vols. (Rome: 1891–1911) I, 176–187 (edited as nr. 15). Salutati praises Petrarch as divinus vir (p. 176, l. 8 et passim), especially for his eloquence, which he presents as the basis of human morality, cf. p. 179, l. 28 - p. 180, l. 5 (punctuation slightly adapted, the translation is, as everywhere else, my own): 'Hec omnia una perficit eloquentia. In quo illud volo consideres, quod, cum hominum causa homo sit genitus, et cuiuslibet hominis appetitui prefecerit deus rationem, que dux et moderatrix de summa mentis arce turbidos motus animi regularet, eidem insuper eloquentiam indultam, quam cum nullo animalium susceperit homo communem, ut haberet quid [corr., quis ed.], quo proximi sui sopitam seu depravatis moribus seu crassioris corporis onere rationem mutue caritatis ignibus excitaret [...]' ('All this was achieved by eloquence. At this point I want you to consider the following: human beings are created for humans' sake, and God has set rational capacity before the sensual wishes of any man. This rational capacity is the leader and the guideline, and from the top of the brain it controls the agitated movements of the mind. Furthermore, eloquence was granted to

Florence already in the fourteenth century paid a teacher at its *Studium* to teach Dante's *Commedia* show how quickly Florentines began to set up Dante and Petrarch as linguistic and literary models which could be compared to the greatest ancient authorities. Their fame did not diminish in the Quattrocento. Rather, Leonardo Bruni in his *Vita di Dante e di Petrarca* presents the two authors as ideal members of the Florentine republic. Dante especially serves as an *exemplum* for intellectual and political virtues combined in one man and can therefore be presented as a typical civic humanist. More general research on the ideological reception of both Dante and Petrarch is desirable. Still, one suspects that Petrarchism in the fifteenth century is not simply a literary movement, but is closely connected with discourses of political and cultural supremacy, between Italy and other countries, but also between specific political entities within Italy.

In this general climate, it is not surprising that love elegists of the fifteenth century also participated in this Petrarchism by incorporating Petrarch's *Canzoniere* into their poetry.¹⁴ They imitated or even translated items of the *Canzoniere* into Latin and incorporated them into their own collections, they re-used the *paradoxa* of Petrarch's collection, and, most importantly, they discussed the model itself by contrasting it with classical and sometimes also medieval alternatives.

Giovanni Marrasio - Struggling with the Middle Ages

My starting point will be Giovanni Marrasio and his *Angelinetum*, a collection of nine poems in the elegiac metre, published in 1429. Marrasio was a member of a group of poets in Siena who were closely connected to the house of the Piccolomini, the son of which, Enea

humans to share with no other creature so that they might have something through which they could excite the rational forces of their neighbour with the fires of mutual love, if these forces had fallen asleep because of his corrupted way of living or because of the weight of his fat body [...]').

¹³ Cf. Baron H., The Crisis of the Early Italian Renaissance. Civic Humanism and Republican Liberty in an Age of Classicism and Tyranny, 2nd ed. (Princeton: 1966). For a critical revaluation of Baron's thesis, cf. Hankins J. (ed.), Renaissance Civic Humanism. Reappraisals and Reflections, Ideas in Context 57 (Cambridge – New York – Melbourne etc.: 2000).

¹⁴ Cf. De Nichilo M., "Petrarca, Salutati, Landino: Rvf 22 e 132", in Porcelli B. (ed.), Petrarca volgare e la sua fortuna sino al Cinquecento = Italianistica 33, 2 (2004) 143–161.

Silvio, was one of their *spiritus rectores*. ¹⁵ Marrasio's poems, together just 258 verses long, have often and (according to me) most unjustly been criticised by modern scholars for their lack of originality and inspiration, but even such critics have accepted the crucial importance of the components as the starting point of humanistic love-elegy. ¹⁶ The dedicatory poem to Leonardo Bruni became famous through Bruni's answering letter in which he joins the discussion on the nature of poetry and brings in Plato's theory of the *furor poeticus*, the frenzy of the poet. The actual elegiac collection, however, begins with the second text (in some manuscripts, the dedicatory poem is not regarded as part of the *Angelinetum*, as is testified by the incipit of poem 2 in at least four manuscripts). ¹⁷ Its opening could not be more explicit:

Little Angela, if you will answer my love, I will write about the greatness of the family of the Piccolomini.¹⁸

The elegiac speaker's declaration of love is direct, even abrupt, as if he had hidden his feelings for too long, so that they now had to burst out. The parallel with the opening of Propertius' first book of elegies is striking. In Propertius, too, the name of the girl opens the collection: Cynthia captures the speaker and, together with the god Amor as her ally, seizes power over his entire life. ¹⁹ The seemingly spontaneous *cri du cœur* of Marrasio's poem, however, forms a stark contrast with the second line, in which we find the same speaker beginning to bargain for his love. Whereas in the first verse, he presents himself as lover, in the second he introduces himself as poet, thus fulfilling the traditional

¹⁵ Cf. Albanese G., "'Civitas Veneris': Percorsi dell'elegia umanistica intorno al Piccolomini", in Catanzaro G. – Cantucci F. (eds.), *Poesia umanistica latina in distici elegiaci. Atti del Convegno internazionale Assisi*, *15–17 maggio 1998* (Assisi: 1999) 125–164.

¹⁶ Cf. for some critical remarks and the general acceptance of the crucial position of the *Angelinetum* for the development of humanistic love poetry Pieper C., *Elegos redolere Vergiliosque sapere'*. *Cristoforo Landinos 'Xandra' zwischen Liebe und Gesellschaft*, Noctes Neolatinae 8 (Hildesheim – Zürich – New York: 2008) 78, note 55.

¹⁷ Cf. Resta G. (ed.), *Johannis Marrasii Angelinetum et carmina varia* (Palermo: 1976) ad loc.: Two manuscripts write above the second poem 'Incipit Angelinetum Marrasii Siciliensis', two other 'Angelineti principium ad Angelinam'.

¹⁸ 'Angelina, meo si respondebis amori,/ quanta fuit scribam Piccolomina domus' (*Angelinetum* 2,1–2). Quoted according to the critical edition of the text by Resta G. (ed.), *Johannis Marrasii Angelinetum* (=*Angelinetum*).

¹⁹ Propertius, *Elegiae* 1,1,1–2 (quoted from: *Sexti Properti Elegiarum libri IV*, ed. P. Fedeli (Stuttgart: 1994)): 'Cynthia prima suis miserum me cepit ocellis/ contactum nullis ante cupidinibus' ('Cynthia was the first to capture the unhappy me with her eyes; previously, I had never experienced any amorous passion').

double role of Roman love elegy.²⁰ Still, the extreme rationality of the argument, namely that Angela could create a win-win situation by returning the lover's love, seems surprising after the strongly personal beginning. The proposal sounds strangely cold and differs from the reader's expectation – as reward for her love, the poet promises not glory for her alone, but praise for her family.²¹ It is not unreasonable that Angela does not seem to be amused: she furrows her brow.²² This reaction finally leads the poetic speaker to another tactic which forms the end of the short poem. Now he promises to sing the praises of Angela herself:

My poem shall first treat you, your enormous beauty, especially the blond hair, the brow and the hands, everything from your head to your feet, the eyes that are similar to stars, the white body whose colour is varied by the rose-like, sweet-smelling red of your mouth. I shall write an eminent poem of all your praises, if you will first give me a clear sign of your love.²³

With these verses, the speaker has respected the conventions as lover and also as poet, as is shown by the beginning of the third poem in

²⁰ Cf. e.g. Bretzigheimer G., Ovids 'Amores'. Poetik in der Erotik, Classica Monacensia 22 (Tübingen: 2001) 11.

Angela is introduced as a member of the Piccolomini family and thus a relative of Enea Silvio. Whether we have to interpret this detail as biographical (thus Resta, *Johannis Marrasii Angelinetum* 114, note 2 and still Bisanti A., "Aspetti dell'imitazione virgiliana nei carmi latini di Giovanni Marrasio", *Orpheus* n.s. 13 (1992) 33–51, esp. 37) is difficult to say. One might also imagine an attempt of Marrasio to enter the (idealized) family of poets around Enea Silvio with his Angela; she would then represent amatory poetry that is already part of the family of Piccolomini through Enea Silvio's *Cinthia* poems. Already in Propertius, the beloved girl is at the same time the Muse of the elegiac poetic speaker, cf. Propertius, *Elegiae* 2,1,3–4 or 2,30.

²² Cf. Angelinetum 2,5: 'obducis frontem?'

²³ [...] Te prius ipsa canam/ et formam egregiam in primis flavosque capillos/ et frontem atque manus a capite usque pedes,/ sideribus similes oculos, cristallina membra,/ quae variat roseus dulcis odore rubor./ Mille tuas scribam praeclaro carmine laudes,/ signa mihi primo si manifesta dabis'. (Angelinetum 2,12–18). The whole v. 16 is reminiscent of Ovid's Amores 3,3,5–6 (quoted from: P. Ovidi Nasonis Amores, Medicamina faciei femineae, Ars amatoria, Remedia amoris, ed. E.J. Kenney (Oxford: 1995)): 'candida, candorem roseo suffusa rubore,/ ante fuit; niveo lucet in ore rubor' ('before, she was white, and the white colour was mixed with a red gleam; still this red shines within her white face'). Through a conjecture of Marrasio's difficult 'odore' (perhaps to be understood as a synaesthetic effect produced by the adjective 'roseus'?) to 'in ore' (cf. also Angelinetum 3,13–14 'sideribus certant oculi, tua labra rubentes/ corallos superant, alba ligustra genae' ('your eyes fight with the stars, your lips surpass red corals, your cheeks, the white shrub'), the text would explicitly mention the red mouth of the girl as well, a must in medieval treatises on writing poetry.

which the smile of Angela captures the speaker.²⁴ The smile itself can be seen as a positive reaction to the speaker's role as lover, whereas the allusion to the already quoted beginning of Propertius shows that as poet, he has finally reached the 'good' path of ancient elegy.

But is this ancient model the only frame we are dealing with? Let us go back to the second poem. At first sight, Marrasio follows the ancients in proposing fame to the beloved if she accepts his courting.²⁵ What is interesting, though, is that in elegiac texts of antiquity the topos is not combined with an actual description of the beloved. And if we find descriptions in other contexts at all, they are rarely systematic, but mention only a few characteristics, which often suit the context of the description. The same can be said for Petrarch. He never describes Laura's outward appearance completely: mostly, her image is depicted with the help of objects or concepts associated with her name – i.e. the gold (oro) of her hair, the laurel or the air (l'aura) - or with the help of general and therefore topical characteristics of her beauty and the quality of her glance.²⁶ Similarly, we do not find a description of the beloved at the very beginning of an elegiac collection. Marrasio, however, does describe Angela in the first poem that strictly belongs to the elegiac cycle. How can we explain this? One possible answer is offered by medieval poetics. In one of the most important medieval treatises on poetry, Matthew of Vendôme's Ars versificandi written in the second half of the twelfth century, we can find the following prescriptive statement:

And further, if we are dealing with the effectiveness of love, for example how Jove was furiously in love with Callisto,²⁷ we first have to touch on the description of the beloved and we have to assign the elegance of her beauty to our description so that, having heard of this beauty as if we

²⁴ Cf. *Angelinetum* 3,1–2: 'Illaqueat risus dulcissimus Angelinai/ Marrasium' ('The sweetest smile of Angelina has constrained Marrasio'). Even more Propertian sounds v. 5 'me rapiunt oculi' ('her eyes are catching me').

²⁵ Cf. e.g. Propertius, *Elegiae* 2,25,3 'ista meis fiet notissima forma libellis' ('her beauty will become most famous through my books'); other places are Propertius 2,5,5ff. and 3,2,18; Ovid, *Amores* 1,3,25f.

²⁶ For the famous aspect of Petrarch's poetic landscapes, cf. e.g. Küpper J., "Mundus imago Laurae: Petrarcas Sonett 'Per mezz'i boschi' und die 'Modernität' des Canzoniere", *Romanische Forschungen* 104 (1992) 52–88.

²⁷ Callisto is sometimes referred to as the girl from Arcadia, cf. for her myth Ovid's *Metamorphoses* 2,401–495 (in v. 460 'Parrhasis erubuit', 'The girl from Arcadia blushed'). The text is quoted from: *P. Ovidii Nasonis Metamorphoses*, ed. W.S. Anderson, 7th ed. (Stuttgart – Leipzig, 1996).

had seen it in a mirror, it becomes probable that Jove's marrow sweated with such numerous and wonderful delights.²⁸

What is more striking is the fact that Marrasio's speaker explicitly promises a description 'a capite usque ad pedes' (verse 14). Such an order is alien to ancient rhetorical treatises; in a poetic description we encounter it for the first time in Maximianus' first elegy, and in prose in Sidonius Apollinaris' description of Theoderic.²⁹ Via these and other models, the technique found its way into prescriptive treatises on poetry written in the Middle Ages. In the thirteenth century, Geoffrey of Vinsauf, explaining how to describe a girl in his *Poetria nova*, concludes:

And thus, the splendour shall descend from the top of the head to the root [=feet] and shall be polished until reaching the nails [=in every detail].³⁰

Geoffrey's prototypical description runs from verse 568 to 602 and describes – in every detail – the following features: hair (golden, color auri), forehead, eyebrows, nose, eyes (gleaming like stars, sideris instar), face (not too red and not too white, nec rubicundae nec nitidae), mouth, lips (red, rutilent), teeth, neck, throat, shoulders, arms, fingers, breast, waist and the parts beneath, which are not specified but alluded to in an uncovertly covert way (aptius hic loquitur animus quam lingua, verse 600). Marrasio's poetic speaker seems to know of this tradition when he uses it as an argument in his courting text. The description in the second poem itself is rather short and uses patterns from the important classical models which had themselves become the basis of topical

²⁸ 'Amplius, si agatur de amoris efficatia, quomodo scilicet Iupiter Parrasidis amore exarserit, prelibanda est puelle descriptio et assignanda puellaris pulcritudinis elegantia, ut audito speculo pulcritudinis verisimile sit et quasi coniecturale auditori Iovis medullas tot et tantis insudasse deliciis' (*Ars versificatoria* 1,40). I cite from the edition of Munari F. (ed.), *Mathei Vindocinensis Opera*, vol. III: *Ars versificatoria*, Storia e letteratura 171 (Rome: 1988) (=*Ars versificatoria*). A general introduction to the system of prescriptive treatises on rhetoric and poetry in high medieval culture is offered by Tilliette J.-Y., *Des mots à la parole. Une lecture de la Poetria nova de Geoffroy de Vinsauf*, Recherches et Rencontres 16 (Geneva: 2000) 25–34.

²⁹ Cf. Gallo E., *The Poetria Nova and its Sources in Early Rhetorical Doctrine*, De Proprietatibus Litterarum 10 (The Hague – Paris: 1971) 183. He adds that in the Song of Songs, we twice find a description *a capite ad pedes* (4,1–5 and 5,10–16) – a fact that surely influenced medieval treatises on poetry.

³⁰ '[...] et sic/ a summo capitis descendat splendor ad ipsam/ radicem totumque simul poliatur ad unguem' (v. 602–604). I cite from the edition Gallo E., *The Poetria Nova*.

descriptions of the Middle Ages – gold-like blond hair and eyes like stars are to be found in Ovid's works as well as those of Geoffrey of Vinsauf or Matthew of Vendôme.³¹

The closest ancient model for the medievalizing features mentioned so far is Ovid's presentation of his beloved Corinna in Amores 1,5: the girl enters the speaker's bedroom and quickly takes off her dress. This leads the speaker to a frivolous description of her naked body. Even if we are dealing with the fifth poem in the first book and Ovid has already found his puella in the third one, Amores 1,5 is the first text in which she is named, which gives the 26 verses the character of a beginning. The biggest contrast with medieval poetics and surely with Marrasio's rather chaste praise lies in the explicit sexuality of Ovid's text. Even if the description also more or less moves from the top downwards, a list of the body-parts mentioned in the text shows the difference: after the hair and the white shoulders (which appear twice), the speaker turns his eyes (and his hands!) to the arms, the breasts, the body and finally the thighs of Corinna. One could say that the centre of interest is different: medieval rules for poetic descriptiones pulchritudinis and also Marrasio's description focus on the head, whereas Ovid looks lower down. 32 For Marrasio, the Ovidian intertext might be important for the end of Angelinetum 3, which offers the clearest hint of actual sexual contact between the speaker and his girl: 'you are the rest for my lust'.33

Let us return to Marrasio's medievalisms: that his description not just accidentally recalls medieval concepts of how to write amatory poetry is proved by the third poem which is completely dedicated to the praise of the girl. We have already seen that, like the second one,

³¹ In *Ars versificatoria* 1,50–58, Matthew offers several master descriptions of different types of persons. For Ovid's role as praeceptor amoris in the Middle Ages, see Schnell R., "Ovids Ars amatoria und die höfische Minnetheorie", *Euphorion* 69 (1975) 132–159, and Gerritsen W.P., "De praeceptor amoris en zijn middeleeuwse leerlingen: De receptie van Ovidius' Ars amatoria, van Fulco van Orléans tot Dirc Potter", *Lampas* 42 (2009) 42–56.

³² Even if Ovid's speaker uses the same *praeteritio*-technique as Geoffrey with regard to the *pudenda* (cf. v. 23 'singula quid referam?' 'Why should I mention more details?'), the naked Corinna has already been brought before the reader's inner eye as a sexual object. Cf. Schmitz T.A., "Cetera quis nescit: Verschwiegene Obszönität in Ovids Liebesdichtung", *Poetica* 30 (1998) 317–349. In Ovid's text, only actual intercourse is unspeakable; in Geoffrey's treatise, it is every part of the female body that is close to the vagina.

³³ 'voluptatis tu mihi prima quies' (Angelinetum 3,28).

it opens with an allusion to Propertius. And just like the second one, it abandons the classical model for a medievalizing *descriptio pulchritudinis*. In *Angelinetum* 3, the focus lies especially on the eyes of the girl. In eight lines, they are celebrated as guiding stars for the lover.³⁴ In medieval concepts of love, the eyes had a prominent position since they were seen as the gates through which love could enter the heart.³⁵ Matthew of Vendôme, in his description of a beautiful girl, calls them *Veneris ministri*,³⁶ the servants of the goddess of love, and in Petrarch's *Canzoniere*, the *innamoramento* still happens via the eyes, which are made especially liquid by the tears wept because of the passion of Christ on Good Friday.³⁷ Apart from the eyes, Marrasio's speaker talks about the following body-parts: the lips, the cheeks, the neck, the whole face, once again the lips, the chest, the neck and finally the whole body.³⁸ *Grosso modo*, we again find the top-down description, and all parts of the body listed here appear on Geoffrey of Vinsauf's list as well.

Marrasio stands at the beginning of the love-poetry tradition in the fifteenth century. His *Angelinetum* opens the way to a productive reception of ancient Roman elegy, but it is nevertheless influenced by medieval traditions. I posit that Marrasio deliberately contrasted them with the ancient models to highlight his conscious choice for a new beginning. The metapoetic dedicatory poem and the combination of medieval and ancient traditions show how aware Marrasio was of creating a new and unusual kind of poetry.

Cristoforo Landino and Tito Vespasiano Strozzi – Struggling with Petrarch

Marrasio prepared the way for his successors, who chose the Roman elegists Horace and Vergil as their main inspiration.³⁹ This does not

³⁴ Angelinetum 3,5–12.

³⁵ Cf. Schnell Ř., Causa Amoris. Liebeskonzeption und Liebesdarstellung in der mittelalterlichen Literatur (Munich – Bern: 1985) 241.

³⁶ Ars versificatoria 1,56,15.

³⁷ Cf. Petrarch's sonnet 3,9–11: 'Trovommi Amor del tutto disarmato/ et aperta la via per gli occhi al core,/ che di lagrime son fatti uscio et varco' ('Amor found me completely unarmed and the way to my heart open via the eyes which tears turned into an exit and a passage'). I cite from the edition Francesco Petrarca, *Canzoniere*, ed. M. Santagata, 2nd ed. (Milan: 2004).

³⁸ Cf. Angelinetum 3,13–24.

³⁹ For Marrasio's negotiation with the great model Vergil (an important aspect of his poetics which I had to leave aside in this paper), cf. Pieper, *Elegos redolere* 78–83.

mean, of course, that one cannot find any medieval influence in the later authors. After Marrasio, the technique of the beloved's description a capite ad pedem still remains popular in the love poetry of the Ouattrocento. To give only two examples: Basinio of Parma in his Cyris (a group of poems which is not transmitted as a collection in the manuscripts, but has been identified as belonging together by later editors) describes the beloved by consecutively mentioning her eyes, lips, neck and hands. 40 And when Naldo Naldi in his Elegiarum libri describes his puella Alba, he mentions her hair, her eyebrows, her eyes, her neck, her teeth and finally her lips. 41 For another example of the continued use of medieval concepts, I want to turn to a crucial moment in love poetry: how does the poetic speaker begin to put his love into words? To answer this question, it is not enough to look at the interaction between ancient models and medieval influences as I did when dealing with Marrasio. Now it is time to take into account the third model: Petrarch's Canzoniere.

In the Middle Ages, it was a widely accepted practice to begin a love poem with the description of an idyllic landscape in spring, the so-called *Natureingang*. ⁴² The awakening of nature as a stimulus for erotic passion is no medieval invention; it can for example be found in Horace's *Odes*. ⁴³ As can be frequently observed, however, medieval poets turned an occasional motif in the ancient models into a regular *topos*. Several aspects such as the new colours of the flowers, the warmth of the sun, the birdsong and the month of May as the appropriate period for flirting formed a fixed set of stereotypes out of which the poets could choose their material.

⁴⁰ Cf. Ferri F. (ed.), *Le poesie liriche di Basinio. Isottaeus, Cyris, Carmina varia*, Testi latini umanistici 1 (Turin: 1925); Cyris 3,21–28 (I only quote the important words): 'nitidi duo sydera, ocelli' – 'purpureae labra columbae' – 'colla spectanda' – 'rara manus'. In the very interesting little collection of this highly innovative poet, the medieval moment is tempered by antiquity. Basinio inserts the girl's description into a classicizing paraclausithyron, a poem in which the lover laments outside the closed doors of his girl's house.

⁴¹ Cf. Juhácz L. (ed.), *Naldus de Naldis Florentinus. Elegiarum libri III ad Laurentium Medicen*, Bibliotheca scriptorum medii recentisque aevorum (Leipzig: 1934); *Elegia* 1,4,25–38: 'flavas comas' – 'supercilium tenuem' – 'lumina (praecedent solem)' – 'lactea colla' – 'dentes (splendent sicut ebur)' – 'labra (sicut ostrum)'.

⁴² Cf. Wulffen B. von, *Der Natureingang in Minnesang und frühem Volkslied* (PhD Munich: 1961).

⁴³ For instance, we find a depiction of spring in 1,4 and 4,7, the famous poems in which the joyful atmosphere of the beginning is then changed into a meditation on approaching death.

One of the clearest reminiscences of such a *Natureingang* can be found in the earlier version of Cristoforo Landino's *Xandra* which began to circulate about 1444. The fourth poem introduces the poet in his role as lover. The text starts with six lines which describe the pleasures of spring; then, the beloved Xandra acts as a medieval princess of love and personally wounds the lover's eyes and heart:

The sun, the biggest light of the world, leads its quick horses through the regions of the golden fleece of the constellation of Phrixos [i.e. the bull], the new-born herbs have already painted the meadows with flowers, the beautiful earth has become green with new leafs, and pleasant birds, inspired by Venus' sting, have filled the leafy land with their lamenting song, when your most truly aimed arrows, Xandra, wounded me first and opened the path of love into the heart.⁴⁴

Nowhere in Roman love elegy do we find a description of spring in such a prominent position. The medieval *Natureingang* has been translated into classical expressions and metaphors. Obviously, such an opening of a poetic love-story was acceptable in the first version of Landino's *Xandra*, which can be described as a diverse collection of shorter poems in elegiac and/or epigrammatic mode. The second edition of the same *Xandra* finished some fifteen years later, however, is a different work. Landino used this version as one important argument to support his application for the chair of Latin rhetoric and poetry at the Florentine *Studium*. By then Propertius and Petrarch had become the main models. In his second version, too, Landino kept the poem mentioned above as the first one which talks about the speaker's love for Xandra. But he added twenty verses before the original open-

⁴⁵ On the question of genre cf. Pieper C., "Genre Negotiations: Cristoforo Landino's Xandra between Elegy and Epigram", in Enenkel K.A.E. – De Beer S. – Rijser D. (eds.), *The Neo-Latin Epigram. A Learned and Witty Genre* Supplementa Humanistica Lovaniensia (Leuven: 2009), 165–190.

⁴⁴ 'Aurea Phrixei rapidos per vellera signi/ maxima lux mundi, sol agitabat equos./ Iam sua nascentes pingebant floribus herbae/ prata, novis foliis pulchra virebat humus,/ et Veneris placidae stimulis excita volucris/ mulcebat querulis frondea rura sonis,/ cum tua me primo certissima, Xandra, sagitta/ fixit et in pectus duxit amoris iter' (*Xandra anterior* 4,1–8). The text is quoted from the critical edition Perosa A. (ed.), *Christophori Landini Carmina omnia*, Nuova collezione di testi umanistici inediti o rari 1 (Florence: 1939). Perosa edits both versions of the *Xandra*, the earlier (=*Xandra anterior*) as part B. The most important classical models of the quoted passage are: Manilius' *Astronomica* (3,304 'Phrixei signi') for the astronomical constellation of the beginning of spring; Lucretius' presentation of Venus as goddess of spring and love in Lucretius 1,1–20 (in: *T. Lucretius Carus, De rerum natura libri sex*, ed. J. Martin [Leipzig: 1969]; a hint on Lucretius also in v. 25 'Veneris stimulis', cf. Lucretius 4,1215); Vergil's *Georgics*, esp. 3,209–211 (in: *P. Vergili Maronis Opera*, ed. R.A.B. Mynors [Oxford: 1969]).

ing lines which by intertextual connections link the whole poem closely with the Augustan elegiac tradition. In another context, I have dealt with the poem in more detail and have shown how Landino, in the second version, discusses several models of beginning love, and finally finds a solution which is close to the beginning of Propertius' elegies and to Petrarch's *Canzoniere*. Therefore, the medieval beginning is less suitable and has to be preceded by a more classical introduction.⁴⁶

Consciousness of the different approaches to the beginning of love in the history of love poetry and a discursive treatment of them can be found in many poets of the fifteenth century. A good and final example of this are Tito Vespasiano Strozzi's Eroticon libri, a collection that grew over more than thirty years, beginning in the early 1440s. The nucleus of the collection, consisting of seven amatory elegies, may date from 1443.47 The first of these poems remained the first poem of the Eroticon libri in successive versions before 1455; in later versions, it became the second poem of the first book. Based on the present state of research on the textual history of Strozzi's collection, it is not possible to say whether Landino's or Strozzi's poem was composed earlier. In any case, I am convinced that the two influenced each other. Whereas Landino in a later edition changed the medieval beginning of his poem to adapt it to the Petrarchan model, Strozzi chose a different route. His text also talks about how the love-story of the poetic speaker and his beloved Anthia began. The first 22 verses read as follows:

The shining light had appeared shortly before the first of May. You, forefathers, have established it as an important day which is celebrated by religious Ferrara with holy pomp. Prizes are set for horse-races, the

⁴⁶ Cf. Pieper, *Elegos redolere* 101–117. The main results of this analysis are: Landino presents his beloved Xandra as working hand in hand with Amor. Therefore, he invokes the model of Propertius, but also that of Petrarch. Laura's divine characteristics seem to have been especially interesting for Landino. From the very beginning of his collection, he reminds the reader of the transcendent potential of love. But his solution is quite different from Petrarch's last canzone to the Virgin Mary. In Petrarch, the love for the divine Lady replaces the erotic love for Laura; Landino attempts to move beyond erotic love not by searching for heaven, but by serving his city – 'caritas patriae' instead of 'caritas divina'. Cf. also Müller G.M., "Zwischen Properz und Petrarca: Strategien der 'aemulatio' im 'Xandra'-Zyklus des Cristoforo Landino", in Föcking M. – Müller G.M. (eds.), *Abgrenzung und Synthese. Lateinische Dichtung und volkssprachliche Traditionen in Renaissance und Barock* (Heidelberg: 2007) 133–164, esp. 141–143.

¹⁴⁷ Cf. Mesdjian B., "Éros dans l'Eroticon de T.V. Strozzi", in De Smet I. – Ford P. (eds.), *Eros et Priapus. Érotisme et obscénité dans la littérature néo-latine* (Geneva: 1997) 25–42, here 26, note 5.

people watching the spectacle rail against the quick asses without having a reason for it, and the crowd cheers happily. A group of young men wearing white bands in their tied back hair enters the competition of the quick palio. It is the time when Zephyr evokes the green herbs and paints the ground with coloured flowers, when the new year starts with red spring and many birds sing in the leafy trees. As I was watching there the palio with curious eyes, a boy with a bow stood in front of me. He had a Cretan quiver on his left shoulder and keen eyes. The rest of his body was naked. After having taken the quick arrows he usually uses, he chose a brilliant one with his white hand and said: 'My boy, admirer of the flying horses, now my right hand will give you something you can admire more'. He had nearly spoken these words when together with his voice the chord sounded, and in my breast, suddenly, I was wounded. ⁴⁸

In Strozzi's poem, we find the basic elements of a *Natureingang* which begins in line 1 with the mentioning of May and which is then continued in verses 9–12 with the *topoi* of the manifold colours of spring and the singing birds in the trees. But within the long first sentence and within this medieval setting, Strozzi gives a more precise date of the event. The day he is writing about is not simply an unspecified day in late April. On the 23rd of April, the day of St. George, the patron of Ferrara, a big horse race is held in the city, the so-called *palio di San Giorgio*. Without mentioning the saint, any reader familiar with the tradition in Ferrara will be able to identify the *cursus* of the poem

⁴⁸ 'Candida lux aderat Maiis vicina Kalendis,/ quam festam, veteres, instituistis, avi,/ quam pia solemni celebrat Ferraria cultu,/ aurea cum admissis praemia ponit equis,/ et male veloces populus spectator asellos [5]/ increpat et plausum turba iocosa ciet,/ cum rapido certat iuvenum manus aemula cursu,/ vitta retroflexam cui premit alba comam,/ tempore quo Zephyrus viridentes evocat herbas/ et vario pictam flore colorat humum, [10]/ purpureo cum vere novus redit annus et ales/ plurima frondosis garrit in arboribus./ Hic dum sollicito spectarem lumine cursus,/ ante mea arcitenens constitit ora puer,/ Gnosia cui leva pendebat parte pharetra [15]/ luminibus rectis cetera nudus erat./ Isque ubi collegit celeres, quibus utitur, alas,/ deprompsit nivea splendida tela manu/ atque ait "O iuvenis, volucrum mirator equorum,/ quod mirere magis, nunc mea dextra dabit". [20]/ Dixerat et pariter sonuit cum voce sagitta,/ inque meo subitum pectore vulnus erat' (Eroticon 1,2 [1,1],1-22). For Strozzi's Eroticon libri, there is no critical edition. The edition by Anita Della Guardia (Tito Vespasiano Strozzi. Poesie tratte dall'Aldina e confrontate coi codici [Modena: 1916]) is disappointing, since it does not differ much from the old Aldina (Strozzi poetae, pater et filius, Venice, [Aldo Manuzio]: 1513). My text follows the ms. Nuovi Acquisti 692 in the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale in Florence [N]; the manuscript offers the collection in four books and thus in an older version than the Aldina [m]. – My text differs from the Aldina in the following points: 5 'et male veloces' \mathcal{N} 'cumque frequens tardos' m; 15 'Gnosia' \mathcal{N} 'aurea' m; 16 'nudus et aspectu, blandus et acer erat' m; 17 'isque' m] 'hisque' N.

with the horse race in honour of St. George's day.⁴⁹ Thus, within a medieval setting of spring, the god of love chooses a religious festival to approach the speaker for the first time.

The situation echoes the constellation of Petrarch's Canzoniere. In the third sonnet, the speaker is overwhelmed by Amor's attack on Good Friday.⁵⁰ Petrarch thus opens a Christian frame within which his love is situated and, from the very beginning, is described as problematic or even sinful: Good Friday symbolizes God's act of redemption for mankind, and everyone should feel compassion with Christ's suffering and gratitude for the victory over death. Petrarch's speaker, however, is touched by earthly love and is therefore led into the hopeless oppressions of love.⁵¹ One further aspect is worth mentioning: the dramatic date of Petrarch's innamoramento is the 6th of April 1327, and therefore a day in early spring. Petrarch's readers, who were familiar with the tradition of the Natureingang, could therefore expect a topical description of nature. But their expectations are not fulfilled. Apart from the sun, Petrarch does not mention nature in his sonnet at all, and the sun does not shine brightly, but is hiding its light out of compassion for Christ.⁵² No happiness, but nature's utmost expression of mourning represents the beginning of Petrarch's love in the Canzoniere. If in other poems, invigorated nature invites everyone to love, the nature of Good Friday aims to suppress amorous feelings. One could see this as a denied Natureingang. 53

Strozzi's poem reacts to Petrarch's beginning by transforming the radical tension of Christian *pietas* and erotic *cupido* into a situation which has less potential for conflict. Therefore he re-inserts the traditional element of the gayness of nature as a stimulus for love. Nevertheless,

 $^{^{\}rm 49}$ The Aldina gives as the title of the poem "Quod die solenni Divi Georgij amare Anthiam coeperit"; in N there is no title at all.

⁵⁰ Cf. note 37.

⁵¹ Cf. a central study on Petrarch's third sonnet: Pastore Stocchi M., "I sonetti III e LXI", *Lectura Petrarce* 1 (1981) 3–23; further Schwarze M., "Unsagbare Augen-Blicke. Das innamoramento in Francesco Petrarcas Canzoniere", in Neumann M. (ed.), *Anblick – Augenblick. Ein interdisziplinäres Symposion* (Würzburg: 2005) 109–129.

⁵² Cf. Petrarch, *Canzoniere* 3,1–2: 'Era il giorno ch'al sol si scoloraro/ per la pietà del suo factore i rai' ('It was the day when the beams of the sun lost their colour out of compassion with its maker').

⁵³ In other poems of the collection in which the speaker does not react to the stimuli of spring, Petrarch also plays with the tradition of the *Natureingang*, e.g. sonnet 310 ("Zephiro torna") with its first eight lines full of natural happiness and the sharp contrast in v. 9–10: 'Ma per me, lasso, tornano i più gravi/ sospiri' ('But for me, alas, the heaviest sighs return').

his *Natureingang* does not simply ignore Petrarch's contribution. As the author of the *Canzoniere*, he does not only choose a spring-setting, but combines it with a religious feast. The choice for St. George's day is surely not arbitrary or only a concession to the city in which Strozzi lived and wrote. Apart from the chronological closeness to the day of Petrarch's *innamoramento*, the horse race is the most attractive aspect of this specific day. It allows Strozzi to insert the third point of reference of love poetry in the Quattrocento: the ancients.

In the first book of his *Ars amatoria*, Ovid gives advice on where to go if one wants to fall in love. One of the best places, he says, is the *Circus* with its horse races, to which the teacher of love dedicates nearly thirty verses. Here, men and women sit next to each other, and amorous feelings can easily be produced through casual conversation about the competitors and their horses or through physical contact. Strozzi engineers an ironic play with levels of fiction in this passage: Strozzi's Amor, the god of love, has listened to the lesson of Ovid, the *praeceptor Amoris*, and appears during the race. He renders the ultimate tribute to the ancient author who, in the prologue of his *Ars amatoria*, had expressed a similar concept: he is the one to domesticate Cupid. 55

In this Ovidian context, it is not surprising that Amor personally appears in Strozzi's poem. His ironic conversation with the poetic speaker evokes the famous beginning of Ovid's *Amores*. In Ovid's poem, Amor turns the poetic speaker into an elegiac poet by shooting a lovebringing arrow into his veins. The tone of the poem is surprisingly light and comic for the beginning of painful elegiac love, especially if one compares it to the beginning of Propertius' first book.⁵⁶ Ovid's Amor is not described as a cruel tyrant, but as a roguish boy who seems to be playing games with the poet. His own verbal utterance is laconic, even un-rhetorical, and very ironic, indeed.⁵⁷ The parallels with Strozzi's Amor are striking. Both are depicted as young boys with quiver and arrows, and both change the focus of the poetic speaker: Ovid's *ego* is no longer interested in warfare and epic, and Strozzi's lover will no

⁵⁴ Cf. Ovid, Ars amatoria 1,135–162 (quoted from: P. Ovidi Nasonis Amores, Medicamina faciei femineae, Ars amatoria, Remedia amoris, ed. E.J. Kenney [Oxford: 1995]).

⁵⁵ Cf. Ovid, Ars amatoria 1,21–24.

⁵⁶ Cf. McKeown J.C. (ed.), Ovid – Amores. Text, Prologomena and Commentary, 4 vols., ARCA. Classical & Medieval Texts, Papers & Monographs 22 (Leeds: 1989) I, 11.

⁵⁷ Cf. Ovid, *Amores* 1,24: "quod"que "canas, vates, accipe" dixit "opus!" ('and he said: "Receive what you shall sing about, great poet!") Cf. McKeown, *Ovid – Amores* I, 26: 'An inspiring deity could hardly be more laconic'.

longer admire horses, but the beautiful Anthia. It is important to note that in both texts, Amor acts as a stimulus for love although the girl in question has not yet appeared. Whereas in Petrarch's third sonnet, Amor uses Laura's eyes as the means of the *innamoramento*, just as Propertius' Amor had done with Cynthia, ⁵⁸ in Strozzi and in Ovid the falling in love is represented as an event independent of any woman. In this context, the *Natureingang* from the beginning receives a new significance. If spring invites everyone to fall in love, one can compare its influence to one of Amor's arrows. A woman is not needed to inspire erotic longings in anyone's heart, and once these are there, a suitable girl can always be found. ⁵⁹ Thus, Strozzi has deliberately chosen not to follow the Petrarchan model of the *innamoramento* in his *Eroticon libri*. He alludes to it, but within a context so different that it does not seem to possess enough authority against two different poetic traditions – the Ovidian and the medieval one.

Summary

Strozzi's poem will serve for a short summary. It is an outstanding illustration of three different traditions of love-poetry which the humanists could refer to: the medieval, the Petrarchan and (most importantly) the ancient one. In most modern interpretations, critics concentrate on the ancient models when dealing with humanist poetry. As I mentioned above, the importance of Petrarch's *Canzoniere* has been recognised

⁵⁸ Cf. Propertius, *Elegiae* 1,1,1–4: 'Cynthia prima suis miserum me cepit ocellis/ contactum nullis ante cupidinibus./ tum mihi constantis deiecit lumina fastus/ et caput impositis pressit Amor pedibus' ('Cynthia was the first to capture my unhappy self with her eyes; previously, I had not experienced any amorous passion. Then Amor forced my arrogant eyes to look to the ground and stood with his feet on my head and forced it to the ground'). The fact that Cynthia's and Amor's function cannot be separated by the lover is highlighted by a syntactic detail: Only at the end of v. 4 does the reader realize that the verbs 'deiecit' and 'pressit' are not related to the agens Cynthia, but to Amor. By then, he already has the image of cruel Cynthia in his mind.

⁵⁹ Cf. Strozzi's verses 35–36 in which he introduces Anthia for the first time – as a didactic object with which Amor teaches him to love: 'Tunc monuit, tenerae valeat quid gloria formae,/ quid faciles oculi virgineusque pudor' ('Then he warned me how worthy the praise of beauty is, how worthy tender eyes and the chastity of a virgin').

⁶⁰ Á look at any critical edition of humanist poetry shows that clearly. The addition of an *apparatus fontium* has become standard practice, but almost always, it only mentions texts from classical antiquity. If medieval and contemporary models would also be included, this would substantially alter our understanding of Renaissance literature.

in the last decades. But besides these two models, the so-called Dark Ages also contributed models for the humanists. Some of them, for example the descriptio a capite ad pedes and the Natureingang, seem to have been rather productive in the fifteenth century. I suppose that it will be possible to find many more examples of love poetry of this period in which the authors do not only use medieval patterns, but use them for their own metapoetical positioning. In a literary tradition based on the principle of imitation, conscious hints at well-known traditions help the authors to shape their individual poetic programme. Not only imitatio of, but also aemulatio with the classical tradition was aspired to by any author in the Ouattrocento. In this context, medievalisms can serve as a negative contrast, but also as an alternative approach, through which the humanistic authors could modify the ancient tradition. Such medievalisms are hardly ever reflected theoretically. They can however be found in poetic practice. In any case, they enlarged the repertory from which the poets could choose their approach to writing about love – one important advantage the humanists had over their ancient predecessors. Aemulatio means exactly this: one accepted the superiority of the classical writers as stylistic models, but at the same time one could aspire to their excellence by adapting their texts to the new circumstances. This conclusion might be reminiscent of the medieval image of the dwarfs on the shoulders of giants. 61 But the humanists were able to formulate the idea more positively. Giovanfrancesco Pico della Mirandola writes to Pietro Bembo in one of his letters: 'And nature is not like an old woman who is so exhausted by parturition that she is almost absent in our times, as if she had born too many children'.62 Why, then, should one believe that natura could not have provided creative power for medieval writers, as well? And if these writers could also rely on nature, why should it not be worth imitating them?

⁶¹ For this comparision, see Leuker T., "Zwerge auf den Schultern von Riesen: Zur Entstehung des berühmten Vergleichs", *Mittellateinisches Jahrbuch* 32 (1997) 71–76.

⁶² Giovanfrancesco Pico della Mirandola, *De imitatione libellus*, in Santangelo G. (ed.), *Le epistole 'De imitatione' di Giovanfrancesco Pico della Mirandola e di Pietro Bembo*, Nuova collezione di testi umanistici inediti o rari 11 (Florence: 1954), 31: 'neque enim quasi vetula mulier suis est viribus parens effoeta natura, ut nostro scilicet hoc saeculo quasi nimio partu lassata defecerit'.

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ON PLEASURE: CONCEPTIONS IN BADIUS ASCENSIUS' STULTIFERAE NAVES (1501)*

Anne-Marie De Gendt

The role of printers and the printing press as agents of cultural change in the period of transition between medieval and early modern times is generally considered to be of major importance. The development and spread of printing in the last decades of the fifteenth century and the first half of the sixteenth century was a significant factor in the diffusion of humanist thought and criticism. Some of the printers who presided over the publication of classical and contemporary works were active scholars and committed humanists themselves, supplying comments on the works that came off their presses.

In France one of the most influential scholar-printers of the era was the Flemish-born Jodocus Badius Ascensius (1462–1535). From 1503 onwards, he ran his own printing office in Paris, where he published an impressive number of classical and humanist texts, often preceded by a preface in his own hand. Best known for his activities as a printer-publisher, Badius was also a renowned grammarian, poet, commentator and creative writer. Among the works he composed, the *Stultiferae Naves*, in which a central position is given to the five senses and the pleasures they procure, is of particular interest to the present essay as it reflects the complex process of transition occurring at the time. Written in Lyons (1498) and published in Paris in 1501 (n.s.),² the work was

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¹ Among other studies on the subject, see Eisenstein E.L., *The Printing Revolution in Early Modern Europe*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: 2005).

² According to Badius, the *Naves* were composed on the request of Angelbert de Marnef, a famous publisher in Paris. Although the treatise was composed in 1498, the *editio princeps* dates from spring 1501 (n.s.). This text has been published and translated into modern French: *La Nef des Folles. Stultiferae Naves de Josse Bade*, présentée par

meant as an *addendum* to the *Stultifera Navis* (1497), the Latin version of Sebastian Brant's satirical and immensely popular *Narrenschiff* (1494).

At the time in which Badius was writing his 'supplement', views about the senses and sensual pleasure were in the process of change. In medieval Christian thought and writings, characterized by the condemnation of worldly joys and the praise of celestial happiness, sensual pleasure or *voluptas*³ was commonly condemned. Although ecclesiastical writings recognized the value of the senses as instruments of knowledge of the Divine and of the signs of God's power in the visible world,⁴ the five senses were usually regarded and represented with notable suspicion, both in textual and in visual sources.⁵

A more nuanced attitude gradually arose during the early modern period. Already in 1431, in his *De Voluptate*, the Roman Lorenzo Valla (1407–1457) argued in favour of a more positive overall conception of the pleasure procured through the senses, arguing this to be compatible with the Christian faith.⁶ In 1606, the French Abbot Pierre Charron, in his *Trésor de la sagesse*, showed a fairly liberal attitude towards the pleasures that accompany humanity's natural needs, procreation included.⁷ In relation to the senses, the neo-Platonic theories

Charles Béné, traduite et annotée par Odette Sauvage (Grenoble: 1979). New editions followed in Basle (1502) and Burgos (date unknown).

³ The origin of the equivalence between *voluptas* and sensual pleasure is to be found in Cicero's writings (see below).

⁴ The *Confessions* of Augustine are particularly relevant in this respect. For an analysis of Augustine's conceptions of the senses as 'instruments both of knowledge and seduction', see Vinge L., *The Five Senses: Studies in a Literary Tradition* (Lund: 1975) 39–46; quotation on page 40.

⁵ During the Middle Ages, visual representations of the five senses were not very numerous. Some of them were neutral, while others had a moralizing tenor. For more details, see e.g., Nordenfalk C., "Les cinq sens dans l'art du moyen-âge", *Revue de l'art* 34 (1976) 17–28.

⁶ The treatise was conceived in Rome and published in Piacenza in 1431. Two years later, Valla rewrote the text and changed the identity of the characters as well as the title (*De vero falsoque bono*). In the third version, the title became *De vero bono*. Generally the work was known as *De voluptate ac de vero bono*. See the introduction to Valla L., *De vero falsoque bono*, ed. M. de Panizza Lorch (Bari: 1970) xi. The treatise has been translated into English: Valla L., *On Pleasure. De Voluptate*, transl. A. Kent Hieatt and Maristella Lorch (New York: 1977). A more recent edition and a German translation was published in 2004: Valla L., *Von der Lust oder Vom wahren Guten. De voluptate sive De vero bono*, herausgegeben und übersetzt von Peter Michael Schenkel (Munich: 2004). For more details on Valla's treatise, see the section: 'Badius' edition of Valla's *De Voluptate*', below.

⁷ 'Nature, mother of pleasure, put pleasure in the actions needed for our subsistence. And good living is living according to Nature. Moses says that God created pleasure' ('Nature mere de volupté [...] ès actions qui sont pour notre besoin, elle y

announced by Marsilio Ficino (1433–1499) contained a positive evaluation of sight and hearing.⁸ In the visual sources, similar developments occurred, and although sixteenth- and seventeenth-century representations of the senses continued to warn against the possible dangers of sensual temptations, the positive aspects of sense perception were increasingly described.⁹

Are traces of these developments to be found in Badius' *Stultiferae Naves*? The present essay will focus on the conceptions of pleasure expressed in this work, examining processes of continuity and change. The following specific questions will be raised: Are there observable distinctions made in Badius' *Stultiferae Naves* with regard to medieval conceptions of sensual pleasure? Has the work been influenced by novel conceptions of the subject which were finding expression in contemporary humanist writings or debates, in and outside France? Is there evidence of conflict between traditional and new views, and is the author aware of a distance between them? Finally, can an analysis of Badius' treatment of pleasure in the *Naves* lead to a better understanding of the broader mechanisms of continuity and change operating at the turn of the sixteenth century? These last questions are most relevant to one of the main themes of this volume: the issue of continuity and discontinuity between the medieval and early modern eras.

A Man in Between

Generally characterized as a humanist, Badius Ascensius clearly is a man of his epoch.¹⁰ Badius' life and career bear the typical hallmarks of

a mis de la volupté. Or bien vivre est consentir à nature. Dieu, dit Moyse, a crée la volupté'). Cited after Vinge, *The Five Senses* 105.

⁸ In Ficino's *Commentary on Plato's 'Symposium'*, on the contrary, smell, taste and touch are associated with lust. For more details, see Vinge, *Five Senses* 71–72.

⁹ For more details on the subject, see e.g., Nordenfalk C., "The Five Senses in Late Medieval and Renaissance Art", Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes 48 (1985) 1–22; Ferino-Pagden S., Immagini del sentire. I cinque sensi nell'arte (Milano: 1996); Schipper C., Mit Lust unter den Händen. Darstellungen der fünf Sinne in der bildenden Kunst des 17. Jahrhunderts (PhD University of Utrecht: 2000).

¹⁰ The biographical information in the following paragraphs is mainly based on Renouard P., *Bibliographie des impressions et des œwres de Josse Badius Ascensius, imprimeur et humaniste 1462–1535*, 3 vols. (Paris: 1908) I, and Gewirtz I.M., *The Prefaces of Jodocus Badius Ascensius: The Humanist Printer as Mediator of French Humanism and the Medieval Tradition in France* (PhD Columbia University: 2003).

early humanism, the term here being defined in the rather strict sense of a revived interest in classical Roman and Greek literature, models, mythology, versification, etc. For many humanists, this renewed interest in the classical heritage was combined with a rejection of medieval scholastic theology and with a search for a newer form of religious expression, advocating a more direct approach to the divine. This was not the case for Badius, whose ethical and religious convictions prove to be largely in accordance with medieval thought. A succinct biographical overview will allow us to determine the importance of Badius' professional activities for the development of early humanism in France, but also to establish the ideological position of this 'traditional' rather than 'progressive' humanist.

Born in Flanders, Badius received his schooling in the city of Ghent. When he had completed his higher education, presumably in Louvain, he travelled to Italy. In Ferrara, he attended the lectures of Battista Guarino (1434–1513), and in Mantua, those of Filippo Beroaldo the Elder (1453–1503). Both were humanists who 'combine[d] [...] interests in classical literary scholarship with moral philosophy and spiritual literature', as Badius himself would do. On his return, probably in 1489, the author settled in Valence, where he taught at the university – most likely Latin grammar and rhetoric. In 1492, Badius became literary director at the Trechsel Presses in Lyons, owned by the renowned printer-publisher Jean Trechsel. Here he started publishing classical and humanist texts. He wrote prefaces for most of these publications, each of which addressed a prominent figure of the era, and he also provided a commentary to some of the works. In the

Two hypotheses have been put forward concerning Badius' place of birth: Assche, close to Brussels, or Ghent. Renouard opts for Ghent, and his argument is convincing. According to this hypothesis, Ascensius does not signify 'from or born in Assche', but is the translation of a current family name in the city of Ghent at that time ('van Assche'). Several times, Badius calls himself Gandensis (Renouard, *Bibliographie* I, 5). For a more extensive discussion of the subject, see Renouard, ibid. I, 4–7, and Gewirtz, *Prefaces* 5–9.

¹² Badius is believed to have studied at the Alma Mater, Gewirtz, *Prefaces* 41–42. The dates of his sojourn in Italy cannot be fixed with certitude. According to Renouard, it must have preceded or followed the period between December 1488 – January 1489, for which there is proof that Badius was in Ghent.

¹³ Battista Guarino was the son of Guarino Veronese (1374–1460). Badius would soon be editing the works of both his Italian preceptors.

¹⁴ Gewirtz, Prefaces 43.

¹⁵ Ibid. 44.

same year, Badius composed a volume of ethical excerpts from classical, medieval and humanist authors, called *Sylvae Morales* (1492).

During his years in Lyons, the Latinist Badius also introduced important reforms to the teaching of grammar, a fundamental phase of the *studia humanitatis*. He started by emending the *Doctrinale puerorum* of Alexander de Villedieu (1175–1240), a versified grammar traditionally used in the Latin curriculum. Later he introduced several prose grammars composed by Italian humanists, completing some of them with his own precepts in verse. ¹⁶ In addition, he composed grammatical manuals that he would re-edit throughout most of his career. According to Renouard, in this way Badius made an important contribution to the transformation of traditional grammatical teaching within and beyond France. ¹⁷

After the death of Jean Trechsel in 1498, Badius moved to Paris in 1499. Until 1503 he continued his editing of classical and humanist authors in collaboration with other printers. In the same period, he also proved to be a respected composer of Latin verses. In 1503, Badius founded his own printing office in Paris, the Praelum Ascensianum, and in the following years established a solid reputation as a publisher of classical and humanist authors, many of whose works he printed and continued to print until his death (1535). In this way, the printer-publisher entered into relationships with numerous humanists, among whom we find Lefèvre d'Étaples, Guillaume Budé, Beatus Rhenanus and Jacques Toussain. The Praelum became a meeting place, where humanists could discuss their works and meet foreign scholars. In addition, Badius was in contact with humanists outside

¹⁶ This text is known as Textus Ascensianus (Renouard, Bibliographie I, 106).

¹⁷ For a synopsis of Badius' grammatical works, see ibid. 105–139. On the other hand, the emendation, rather than the rejection, of Villedieu's *Doctrinale* proves a certain attachment to medieval methods of teaching Latin.

¹⁸ According to Renouard, Badius had already travelled to Paris in 1497, establishing connections with, for example, the brothers de Marnef, renowned Parisian librarians (ibid. 12). On the death of Jean Trechsel, who was married twice, a conflict between the children of each marriage arose. Badius, having chosen the side of the heirs from the first marriage, did not succeed to the direction of the printing office. However, he did marry Hostelye, the eldest daughter of his former employer (ibid. 16–17).

¹⁹ The majority of these verses can be found in both works that build on Brant's *Narrenschiff:* Badius' own *Navis Stultifera* (1505) – a work that, though bearing the same title as the Latin translation of Brant's opus, has only the woodcuts in common with its model – and the *Stultiferae Naves*, here under discussion. For a complete survey of Badius' verse texts, see ibid. 168–172.

France, the most important of whom was Erasmus of Rotterdam.²⁰ Through his correspondents abroad, the printer-publisher was notified of new publications from Italy and received copies of these texts. Badius continued to write prefaces to the published works, although his dedications now addressed the higher nobility, including influential members of the royal bureaucracy and the Church.²¹ These preambles offer a privileged observation of literary and ideological developments that were taking place in early humanist Paris.

Although Badius' commitment to and role in the propagation of the *studia humanitatis* – and of classical literature in general – are considerable, the tribute he paid to medieval traditions is also important. Due to the schooling that he received at the Brethren of the Common Life Community in Ghent, by teachers who were Brothers of Saint Jerome, Badius was profoundly influenced by the spirit of the Devotio Moderna or Modern Devotion. This reform movement, particularly influential in the Low Countries during the fifteenth century, emphasized 'living in Christ, reading Scripture, progressing in moral sanctity, and developing interiority'.²² As the New Devout thought that the heart or soul was dominated by desires and impulses which, as a result of the Fall, were mainly evil, one of their principal objectives was progress in virtue and avoidance of vice. Consequently, the senses were also regarded with profound defiance, since they were thought to lead the subject to illicit carnal desires.

In fact Badius never denied the severe moral and religious teachings of his educators. In a letter from 1510, he offered them his gratitude, using Horace's words: 'A clay vase never loses the scent of the first perfume that it has contained'.²³ In 1526, the printer-publisher composed a biography of one of the leading figures of the Modern Devotion

²⁰ In 1528, in his *Ciceronianus*, Erasmus praised Badius' skills in Latin, which he judged to be superior to those of Guillaume Budé. These comments lay behind a great commotion in French humanist circles. It is generally admitted that this controversy, and Erasmus' reactions to it, led to an interruption in the relationship between Badius and Erasmus. Other hypotheses are advanced by Gewirtz, *Prefaces* 53–54, and Wiriath R., "Les rapports de Josse Bade Ascensius avec Érasme et Lefèvre d'Étaples", *Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et de Renaissance* 11 (1949) 66–71.

⁵¹ Gewirtz, Prefaces 49. A large number of these prefaces have been translated into French. See Lebel M., Josse Bade, dit Badius (1462–1535). Préfaces de Josse Bade (1462–1535). Humaniste, éditeur-imprimeur et préfacier (Louvain: 1988).

Van Engen J., Devotio Moderna: Basic Writings (New York – Mahwah: 1988) 27.
 Wiriath, "Les rapports de Josse Bade" 67.

Movement, Thomas à Kempis, whose *Imitatio Christi* was printed and reprinted several times at the Praelum Ascensianum.

Although Badius' printing and publishing activities principally served to promote classical and humanist writings, several medieval texts came off his presses, such as Boethius' *Consolatio Philosophiae*, Cato's *Distichs*, Alain de Lille's *Liber Parabolarum* and William of Ockham's *Quaestiones in IV libros sententiarum*, all of which were generally decried in humanist circles.²⁴ Badius did not distance himself from medieval Ockhamism or scholasticism, and due to his Modern Devotional schooling and convictions he was also unable to agree with a philological approach to the Bible, as advocated by Lorenzo Valla and Erasmus, for example. For Badius, the Bible was pre-eminently a source of spiritual and doctrinal authority.²⁵

Being a humanist with religious and moral opinions deeply embedded in medieval thought, Badius can justly be called 'a man in between'. Let us now turn to a discussion of Badius' views on the senses and sensual pleasure as he presents and represents them in his *Naves*. Do these views conform to prevalent, medieval conceptions of pleasure? Or can differences or nuances be noted that perhaps reflect the influence of the author's humanist readings and/or encounters?

Structure and Principles of the Stultiferae Naves

Let us first examine the composition of the *Stultiferae Naves*. In his supplement to Brant's *Narrenschiff*, Badius adopts and exploits the navigation motif introduced by his predecessor as a tool to criticize the weaknesses and vices of his era. According to the prologue to the *Naves*, the author wants to add to the *Ship of Fools* a vessel 'of a rather small size, but [with] an immense capacity, because it has to contain all human folly'. This vessel will be navigated by Eve, 'mother of all folly', and accompanied by five other ships. Each of them will be

 $^{^{24}}$ As Béné remarks, Rabelais lists some of them in chapter XIV of his $\it Gargantua$. Béné, $\it Nef$ 5 and 18, note 5.

²⁵ On these aspects of Badius' traditionalism, see Gewirtz, *Prefaces* 598–600.

²⁶ '[...] exiguo quidem corpusculo, sed ingentissima (si non fallor) capacitate, quippe in qua humana fere locanda est stultitia', Béné, Nef 25, 4. In all references to the Naves, the first number indicates the page, while the second and following refer to the numbered paragraphs. The English translations from the Naves are mine. The French translation of the Latin text by Odette Sauvage has been very helpful, Béné, Nef.

sailed by one of the Five Senses, allegorically represented as foolish women.²⁷ By showing his audience the dangers of an excessive indulgence towards the appeal of the Senses, the author wants to promote the 'ardiam virtutem viam' – 'the arduous road of Virtue, leading to the harbour of eternal salvation'.²⁸

In the *Naves*, the concept of the Five Senses operates as a structural device.²⁹ Introduced by a preface (*Praefatio*) and an introductory section (*Explanatio*) – dedicated to Eve and her follies – the work is divided into five chapters. Each of these chapters is devoted to one of the Senses: *Visus* (Sight), *Auditus* (Hearing), *Olfactus* (Smell), *Gustus* (Taste) and *Tactus* (Touch).³⁰ The text is completed by three concluding texts: an *Avocatio* or appeal by the author, a *Dehortatio* or warning, and a *Peroratio* or final word. The *Naves* is also illustrated by six expressive woodcuts, the 'message' of which conforms to that presented in the text.³¹

Each of the chapters dedicated to the senses is composed of two different parts. A longer part in prose is followed by a much shorter passage in verse. Generally the prose sections start with a review of the prevailing, but often contradictory, opinions of the era on the subject of sensual perception. Questions as discussed in classical philosophy and science are raised, such as: 'In which way is visual perception realized: by means of rays emitted by the eyes and directed towards the objects, or by the opposite, or by internal perception?' This initial scientific approach clearly contrasts with the medieval, essentially

 $^{^{27}}$ In this article capitals are used to refer to the allegorical figures of the Five Senses.

²⁸ '[...] ardiam virtutem viam [...] salutis acternae portum [...]', Béné, Nef 29, 10.
²⁹ A similar use of the schema of the Five Senses can be found in several other texts from the Middle Ages. See Cerquiglini-Toulet J., "Le schéma des cinq sens, d'une théorie de la connaissance à la création de formes littéraires", Micrologus 10 (2002): I cinque sensi/The Five Senses 55–69.

⁵⁰ The classification is in accordance with the traditional hierarchical order of the senses established by Aristotle and generally maintained during the Middle Ages. In medieval literary texts, however, variations are found, mostly regarding the precedence of *visus* or *auditus*. For literary representations of the five senses, see Vinge, *The Five Senses*, and Cerquiglini-Toulet, "Le schéma des cinq sens".

³¹ It is difficult to know exactly what part Badius played in the production of the woodcuts. Did he supervise the artist's work, or was this entirely the responsibility of the publisher (i.e. de Marnef)? For a study of the illustrations, see Nordenfalk, "The Five Senses" 10–15.

³² The different views enumerated here are those of, respectively, the Stoics, Epicurus (somewhat simplified) and the Peripatetics.

moralistic tradition of representing the senses.³³ In the subsequent paragraphs, however, we quickly recover the moralistic standard, since Badius, exploiting the typical 'catalogue' procedure, continues by presenting examples of those – men and women – who fell prey to the temptations of the senses and ended badly. In both the scientific and the moralizing passages, Badius amply draws on – and refers to – existing sources, classical as well as biblical. As a result, at times the *Naves* resembles a compilation.³⁴

While the prose sections warn against the aberrations to which the senses can and usually do lead, the verse passages have a totally different tenor. They are called *celeusma*, which means a captain's song which encourages the oarsmen to row rhythmically. A change of the authorial voice occurs, with each of the songs originating from one of the Senses – the female captains of the allegorical ships. In the *celeusmas*, sensual delights are evoked in a highly suggestive and lyrical way, preceded or followed by severe warnings from Badius not to follow these enticing invitations, voiced by perfidious women.³⁵

'Medieval' and 'Humanist' Aspects of the Naves

Badius' discourse on the senses and on sensual pleasure clearly provides evidence of a humanist approach. The author wrote his supplement in Latin, intending to have it translated into French.³⁶ In the prose sections, Badius' knowledge and examples draw widely on

³³ On the moralistic tenor of most of the medieval representations of the senses, see Vinge, *The Five Senses*, and Nordenfalk, "Les cinq sens". On the moral disapproval of the senses, see the subsequent section.

³⁴ In his *Peroratio*, Badius apologizes for his 'pillage' of sayings from others, declaring that 'nothing is said that has not been said before', 'Nullum [...] est dictum quod non dictum prius', in Béné, *Nef* 61, 1 (itself a quotation from Terence).

³⁵ In my article "Virtus et voluplas: représentations ambivalentes des cinq sens dans les Stultiferae Naves de Badius Ascensius" (forthcoming), I discuss the tenor and function of these verse sections, which, in my opinion, do not alter the overall message of the Naves. Moreover, the introductory chapter on Eve and her follies (Explanatio) also ends with a part in rhyme, but here the verses – called elegia – express the bitter regrets of Eve for having succumbed to the temptations of the Senses. Among the concluding texts, the Dehortatio is also written in verse.

³⁶ '[...] ut in vernaculam gallis linguam verterentur', Béné, Nef 61, 1. The Naves was translated into French by Jean Drouyn in 1498, before the printing of Badius' Latin text. In the French translation, the senses are mentioned in the title: La (Grant) Nef des Folles selon les cinq sens de nature.

classical sources, either quoted from the original or on many occasions from the *Noctes Atticae* (c. 180 AD). These well-known miscellanies by the Roman compiler Aulus Gellius, already popular during the Middle Ages, had received renewed interest in humanist circles.³⁷ Furthermore, the author abundantly exploited classical mythology, principally in the poetry sections, demonstrating a more than superficial knowledge of the subject. Verses of classical authors – mainly Horace – can be recognized in the *celeusmas*. The poetic metre of these songs is also based on classical models and testifies to a humanist penchant for complex rhyme schemes: the songs of *Visus*, *Olfactus*, *Gustus* and *Tactus* are written in elegiac couplets, while in the song of *Auditus*, hexameters alternate with shorter verses.³⁸

While the above-mentioned 'scientific' approach to the senses in the prose sections also reveals a humanist mind, their moral evaluation appears to be profoundly rooted in the medieval tradition.³⁹ Although in medieval thought the senses – neither good nor bad in themselves – are regarded as neutral on the moral level, they were supposed to generate all kinds of sensual temptations.⁴⁰ Hence they were considered to be instruments of sin, or at least as leading to sin. In the *Naves*, the dangers of the senses are frequently stressed. The link between the senses and the vices is also exploited, especially in the woodcuts accompanying the text,⁴¹ as is the traditional association of women with sensuality. The Five Senses are represented as foolish women on both the textual and visual levels and compared to the Five Foolish Maidens of the Bible.⁴²

³⁷ In 1503, for instance, Beroaldo the Elder provided commentaries on the text. In 1517, a new edition of the *Noctes Atticae* was printed at the Praelum Ascensianum. On Gellius' authority and popularity during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, see Holford-Strevens L., *Aulus Gellius: An Antonine Scholar and his Achievement*, rev. ed. (Oxford: 2003).

³⁸ See Béné, Nef 12, note 23.

³⁹ In the chapter on *Auditus*, Badius even minimizes the importance of the 'scientific' passages by declaring that the controversial statements just evoked do not contain 'any serious remark that is useful for life conduct' ('aliquid solidum ad rationem vitae pertinens'), ibid. 41, 4.

⁴⁰ Medieval views on the senses are profoundly influenced by Aristotelian as well as Thomist ideas. For general considerations on the importance of the senses through the ages, see Vinge, *The Five Senses*, as well as Jütte R., *A History of the Senses: From Antiquity to Cyberspace* (Cambridge, MA – Malden, MA: 2005).

For more details on this subject, see Nordenfalk, "The Five Senses" 12–13.

⁴² For the parable of the Five Foolish Maidens, see Matthew 15.1–13. For an analysis of gender aspects in the *Naves*, see my "'Als vijf dwaze maagden': De zintuigen in Badius' *Stultiferae Naves*", *Jaarboek voor Vrouwenstudies* 28 (2008) 153–167.

Badius' judgment of the pleasures procured by the senses is also in accordance with the medieval tradition and in particular with Modern Devotional thought. In the prose sections, the author prescribes the moderate use of the senses, in order to guarantee the salvation of the soul. In the final *Avocatio* and *Dissuasio*, the condemnation of *voluptas* becomes predominant. Here the transience of worldly joys is rigorously opposed to the eternity and immutability of the final divine sentence. As in a fiery sermon, the author repeatedly emphasizes the fleeting character of all delights attainable through the senses.⁴³

Bestial and 'Higher' Pleasure

Although Badius' overall view on the senses and on sensual pleasure appears to be guite straightforward and his work does not seem to provide any evidence of evolution with respect to medieval opinions, a few prose passages in the sections on Olfactus and Gustus offer some more nuanced assertions. In the chapter on Olfactus, quoting Aulus Gellius, Badius affirms that 'the pleasure that is procured by all the senses, when it is excessive, is judged shameful and bad. But the pleasure procured by Gustus and Tactus, when it is excessive, is [...] the worst of all'. 44 Indeed, he says, the pleasures procured by these senses are bestial, because humanity shares them with the animal.⁴⁵ In this passage we recognize the traditional, originally Aristotelian, division between the higher (Visus and Auditus) and the lower or 'bestial' senses (Gustus and Tactus).46 In the chapter on Gustus, Badius lists those who have made an intemperate use of this sense. He includes 'all those who have put their supreme good in the pleasure of the flesh, because their belly is their god, and of whom it is said that they are disciples of

⁴³ See, for instance, Béné, Nef 59, 10 and 60, 40.

⁴⁴ 'Ex his omnibus [sensibus] quae immodice voluptas capitur: turpis atque improba existimatur. Sed enim quae nimia ex gustu atque tactu est: ea voluptas [...] omnium rerum foedissima est', ibid. 48, 1–2. Here the author anticipates the sections concerning *Tactus* and especially *Gustus*.

⁴⁵ Ibid. 99, 2–3. The whole paragraph seems to be a verbatim quotation of the chapter on the senses in Aulus Gellius XIX, 2.

⁴⁶ Olfactus occupies a particular position in the range. It is mostly seen as a transitional element and as the least treacherous of the senses. For more details on the hierarchy of the senses, see Vinge, *The Five Senses* and Jütte, *History of the Senses*.

the doctrine of Epicurus'.⁴⁷ In the following passage, however, Badius describes Epicurus as a 'remarkable and very sober man, who contented himself with some vegetables'.⁴⁸ He continues, explaining the true meaning of the word *voluptas* in the Epicurean doctrine, with reference to Gellius: 'the "voluptas" that he called *summum bonum* was defined by him as a harmonious state of the body'.⁴⁹

This definition of *voluptas* according to the 'true' Epicurus suggests that, in addition to the 'medieval' negative interpretation of the term, another, more neutral meaning can be distinguished. Beyond the *beluina voluptas* (lower, bestial pleasure) Badius seems to recognize a higher form of *voluptas*. As a matter of fact, a terminological shift occurs, as in this passage the *nomen 'voluptas*', which so often signifies mere sensual pleasure, acquires another signification, inspired by Epicurus' philosophy. ⁵⁰ Thus, with reference to Epicurus (and quoting Gellius), Badius makes a philosophical statement and also evokes the concept of *summum bonum*, the highest good, a major topic of classical Greek philosophical writings. ⁵¹

A Case for Epicurus?

The positive statement on the teachings and the personality of the Greek philosopher Epicurus, a 'remarkable and very sober man', continues in the passage following the Epicurean definition of the *summum bonum*. In referring to the Roman Stoic philosopher Seneca (c. 4 BC–65 AD), Badius quotes from the twenty-first letter of *Epistulae Morales ad Lucilium* (63–64 AD) where Seneca remarks: 'I approve and readily remember these remarkable words of Epicurus, in order to prove to those who wish to rely on them – trying to find a veil to cover

⁴⁷ '[...] omnes qui in voluptate carnis summum bonum posuerunt utpote quorum deus est venter eorum: qui ab epicuri dogmate originem traxisse dicuntur', Béné, *Nef* 51 3

 $^{^{48}}$ '[...] cum tamen ipse epicurus fuerit egregius paupertatis frugalitatisque amator holusculis contentus', ibid. 51, 3.

⁴⁹ 'Voluptatem quam summum bonum dixit diffinivit corporis constantem habitum', ibid. 51, 3.

⁵⁰ Badius uses different terms to indicate sensual pleasure, 'voluptas' or 'beluina voluptas' being the most frequently employed.

⁵¹ The notion of *summum bonum* also occurs in the chapter on *Visus*, where it is given a religious interpretation, i.e. the *visio Dei*, see Béné, *Nef* 32, 2.

their vices – that, wherever they go, they have to live virtuously'. ⁵² The subsequent passage reproduces the corresponding lines of Seneca's letter and ends with Badius' words: 'And, according to this text, it clearly appears that Epicurus himself loved and prescribed sobriety, while his adherents only sought out physical pleasure'.53

This positive appreciation of Epicurus seems to be flatly opposed to the representation of the Greek philosopher current in the medieval tradition. During the Middle Ages, where knowledge of Epicurus' ethical doctrine came from indirect sources and was incomplete, the Greek philosopher was indeed judged incorrectly.⁵⁴ Due to patristic and other writings, his teachings were generally despised, with Epicurus' notion of voluptas understood unambiguously, though erroneously, to advocate the active gratification of sensual desires.⁵⁵ The term 'Epicurean' thus became practically synonymous with a primary concern for worldly delights. In the model adopted by Badius, that of Brant's Narrenschiff, an analogous condemnation of the 'Epicurean' voluptas can still be found.56

In the Naves, a passage in the chapter on Gustus raises the issue of the right interpretation of the teachings of Epicurus (341–270 BC). Here Badius establishes a marked difference between the Master himself and those who, in the following epochs, misinterpreted his words and used them as a pretext to enjoy unbridled sensual pleasure. Should we consider Badius as an advocate of Epicurus, then? Several times the author mentions the Greek philosopher in a quite neutral way, in what we have called the scientific passages on the senses. In the chapters

^{52 &#}x27;Et libentius epicuri egregia dicta commemoro: ut isti qui ad illa confugient spe mala inducti: qui velamentum ipsorum suorum vitiorum habituros se existimant: probent quocunque ierint honeste esse vivendum', ibid. 51, 4.

^{53 &#}x27;Ex quibus [verbis] constat ipsum sobrietatem amasse et praecepisse: eius tamen

sequaces voluptatem corporis secuti sunt', ibid. 52, 6.

54 From Latin Antiquity on, Epicurean philosophy was presented in a tendentious way. After having enjoyed remarkable success in Italy during the first part of the first century BC, the doctrines of Epicurus were presented in a less favourable and more biased light in, for example, Cicero's writings.

⁵⁵ On the appraisal of Epicurus in patristic writings, see Jones, *The Epicurean Tradi*tion chapter 4. On some rare favourable accounts, see the same chapter and below.

⁵⁶ In chapter 50 – entitled 'On sensual pleasure' – Brant repeatedly condemns the pleasures procured by the senses. He concludes his discourse with the categorical words: 'The whole world's base licentiousness/ Turns finally to bitterness/ Though Master Epicurus/ Places the highest good in voluptuousness', 'Der ganzen welt wollustikeyt/ Endt sich zu letst mit bitterkeyt/ Wie wol der meyster Epycurus/ Das hohst gut setzet jnn wollust', Brant S., Das Narrenschiff. Sebastian Brant. 1494. Photomechanical reproduction of the editio princeps (Budel: 2007) II, chapter 50: Von wollust.

on *Visus* and *Auditus*, for example, Epicurus' theories on sensual perception are given the same respect as those of Plato, Democritus and the Stoics. Badius' statements in the chapter on *Gustus*, however, go beyond this neutral attitude and seem to contribute to the moral rehabilitation of the Greek philosopher. The gap between the person and the real doctrine of Epicurus on the one hand, and the treacherous interpretations raised in the centuries after his death on the other, is indeed explicitly mentioned.

Could Badius' positive appraisal of Epicurus and his doctrine have been inspired by ongoing humanist debates on the subject? During the Italian Renaissance period, the correct interpretation of the Epicurean doctrine had become quite a lively topic around the beginning of the fifteenth century.⁵⁷ As early as October 1400, in his *De felicitate*, the humanist Francesco Zabarella (1360–1417) advanced the view that Epicurus had been largely misunderstood. In 1417, the discovery – by Poggio Bracciolini – of the manuscript *De rerum natura* by Lucretius, the major source through which the philosophy of Epicurus had been transmitted,⁵⁸ revived interest in Epicurus and Epicureanism in Italy. Several Italian humanists, for example Cristoforo Landino (1424–1504), a member of the Platonic Academy in Florence,⁵⁹ defended Epicurus' personal qualities and refuted the accusations of his detractors.

The *Naves* seems to be a 'northern' echo of these positive Italian accounts of Epicurus. We should, however, not forget that an improved knowledge and appreciation of the Epicurean doctrine in humanist circles – south and north – had also been supported by the renewed popularity of Seneca's works. The moralistic writings of the Roman Stoic philosopher, and especially the *Epistulae Morales* quoted by Badius, were already well known in the Middle Ages, ⁶⁰ but their

⁵⁷ For a detailed exposé of the 'humanist debate', see chapter 6 in Jones, *The Epicurean Tradition*.

⁵⁸ Until then, *De rerum natura* had been a forgotten poem, surviving only in quotations found in other works; cf. Reeve M.D., "The Italian Tradition of Lucretius", *Italia medioevale e umanistica* 23 (1980) 27–48.

⁵⁹ In his teaching, Cristoforo Landino attempted to reconcile Platonism with Aristotelianism and Christian revelation with the wisdom of Classical Antiquity.

⁶⁰ This popularity is testified to by a huge number of translations and anthologies of fragments that were not in conflict with Christian thought. See Fothergill-Payne L., "Seneca's Role in Popularizing Epicurus in the Sixteenth Century", in Osler M.J. (ed.), Atoms, 'Pneuma' and Tranquillity: Epicurean and Stoic Themes in European Thought (Cambridge – New York – Melbourne: 1991) 118.

success increased considerably during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Among Seneca's writings, the best read were *Vita Beata* and *Epistulae Morales*, and it is precisely in these works that Epicurus' doctrines are delivered in a largely positive way. ⁶¹ Moreover, until late in the sixteenth century, the *Epistulae* continued to circulate in a medieval anthology that did not include the letters which voiced Seneca's disagreement with several Epicurean doctrines. As a result, the image of Epicurus that was gained through what in fact was only part of the *Epistulae* was generally exaggerated positively. ⁶² Whether Badius took his inspiration from Italian sources or from Seneca's works, also influential in Modern Devotional teaching, ⁶³ the author clearly makes a case for Epicurus. The question is: why?

Conflicting Views?

What is the function of Badius' positive statement on Epicurus in the *Stultiferae Naves*? How is this passage to be balanced with his general view of the senses and sensual pleasure voiced in the work?

For a proper answer to this question, we have to return to Seneca's correspondence to Lucilius. In these writings, Seneca argues in favour of Stoicism, where honestas and virtus are radically opposed to voluptas understood as mere 'bestial' sensual pleasure. Seneca's purpose is to convince his correspondent to abandon his Epicurean world-view and to become an adept of Stoicism. In this argument, the positive judgment of Epicurus seems to be an argumentum ad contrarium: Epicurus' doctrine can certainly not be used as a pretext for abandoning oneself with impunity to the pleasures of the stomach, since Epicurus himself was such a sober man! During the Middle Ages, Seneca's argument in letter twenty-one, as quoted by Badius, was well known, as it was used in patristic texts written by, for example, Hieronymus (Saint Jerome), one of the key authors studied in Modern Devotional learning. In

⁶¹ Ibid. 122.

⁶² In the *Vita Beata*, the distinction that has to be made between Epicurus and his followers is explicitly mentioned, as well as the responsibility of the latter for the bad reputation of the Epicurean school (ibid. 122). During the Middle Ages, the positive sayings of Seneca concerning Epicurus apparently could not overcome the general disapproval of the Greek philosopher. In patristic writings, where some rare positive accounts of Epicurus can be found, praise and disapproval also went hand in hand.

⁶³ Gewirtz, *Prefaces* 33.

the Adversus Jovinianum (393 AD), for instance, Epicurus' promotion of a simple diet is invoked. Here a positive statement on the sobriety of Epicurus is used in defence of a theological argument concerning abstinence.

An analogous strategy seems to be employed by Badius. In the Naves, as well as in Seneca's correspondence and Jerome's writings, the defence of Epicurus seems to be an argument in favour of Stoic and/ or Christian values, 64 and certainly not a case for so-called 'Epicurean' teachings, that is, an argument in support of sensual pleasure. Hence the recognition of Epicurus' personal value, as well as the acknowledgment of the false interpretation of his teachings through the centuries, does not really alter the moral conception of sensual pleasure that sustains the Naves. On the contrary, it is meant to reinforce Badius' warnings against the dangers of the (beluina) voluptas, and does not keep the author from elsewhere using the name of Epicurus in the 'traditional', 'medieval' way. Indeed, later in the chapter on Gustus, Badius quotes Horace – clearly characterized as one of the 'Epicureans' – who calls himself 'a swine belonging to the flock of Epicurus'. 65 Yet, implicitly, this statement indicates once more the gap between Epicurus and his followers.

Badius' Edition of Valla's De Voluptate

In 1512, fourteen years after the composition of the *Naves*, the printer-publisher Badius Ascensius presided over the publication of Lorenzo Valla's treatise *De Voluptate*. ⁶⁶ This major work discusses a certain number of philosophical conceptions of what must be considered as the highest good within life (*summum bonum*). It is written as a *disputatio*, a dialogue between a spokesman for Stoic beliefs, a second speaker who defends the so-called Epicurean conceptions, and a third character who provides a 'new' conception of *voluptas*. The idea of *voluptas* developed in the third section is meant to be fully compatible with Christian

⁶⁴ On the correspondence between both, see below.

⁶⁵ '[...] epicuri de grege porcum' (Béné, *Nef* 52, 6). A similar phenomenon can be seen in the *Contra Jovinianum*, where Jerome presents both a positive and a disparaging image of Epicurus. See Jones, *The Epicurean Tradition* 109.

⁶⁶ According to Lorch, Badius' edition is the only extant copy of the first version. See Valla, *On Pleasure* 27.

beliefs.⁶⁷ In this section, the term *voluptas* is given a new meaning, one which 'embrace[s] both bodily and spiritual pleasure, and even everlasting happiness'.⁶⁸ The senses are not rejected, but fully integrated with the spiritual and celestial happiness advocated by Valla, whose originality and audacity consists in the use of the term *voluptas*, pleasure – 'to which we have never been given nor wanted ever to seem to be inclined' – to describe this form of happiness.⁶⁹

In the last decades of the fifteenth century, Valla's *De Voluptate* circulated throughout the Low Countries. It was printed in Louvain in 1483,⁷⁰ a year which precedes or roughly coincides with the period in which presumably Badius was there, completing his education. Thus, Badius most likely already knew of Valla's treatise before the composition of the *Naves*, whether he had seen the work in Flanders or during his stay in Italy.

It is not without hesitation that Badius decided to print Valla's treatise in 1512. In that year, his printing office was flourishing and he had become one of the *libraires jurés* (licensed booksellers) of the Sorbonne's Faculty of Theology. According to his habit, Badius provided the edition of *De Voluptate* with a preface, a discourse addressed to Guilielmus Parvus (Guillaume Petit), confessor of King Louis XI and grand *amateur* of manuscripts. In the first lines, Badius expresses his reticence concerning the printing of such a controversial work:

⁶⁷ Different opinions have been expressed on the question which one of them, the Epicurean or the Christian, has to be considered as Valla's spokesman. In his most recent book, Lodi Nauta adds new elements to the discussion, comparing the *De voluptate* to another of Valla's works, the *Repastinatio*. See Nauta L., *In Defense of Common Sense: Lorenzo Valla's Humanist Critique of Scholastic Philosophy* (Cambridge, MA: 2009) chapter 5.

⁶⁶ Panizza L., "Valla's *De voluptate ac de vero bono* and Erasmus' *Stultitiae Laus*: Renewing Christian Ethics", *Yearbook Erasmus of Rotterdam Society* (1981) 3, note 5. According to Lorch, Valla's treatise is 'an attempt to render [...] a deeply felt conviction that life as we live it first and foremost with our senses is a good (*bonum*), in fact the only good', Lorch, M. de Panizza, "The Epicurean in Valla's *On Pleasure*", in Osler, *Atoms* 92. The conceptions advanced in the third part seem to display some analogies with views articulated by Thomas of Aquinas and of which Valla might have been aware, Lorch, "The Epicurean" 91.

⁶⁹ Here Valla explains the choice of the title of his Dialogue and the use of the word *voluptas*. Quoted after ibid. 91.

⁷⁰ Vecce C., "Tradizioni valliane tra Parigi e le Fiandre dal Cusano ad Erasmo", Besomi O. − Regoliosi M. (eds.), *Lorenzo Valla e l'umanesimo italiano*. Atti del Convegno internazionale di studi umanistici (Parma, 18−19 October 1984) (Padova: 1986) 399−408.

⁷¹ Gewirtz, Prefaces 49.

⁷² Guillaume Petit collected important works concerning the history of France and transmitted them to Badius, Renouard, *Bibliographie* I, 26.

I have some fears, Reverend Father, and not without reason, that a great disaster advances threateningly towards our enterprise [...] at the printing of this (I repeat) doctrinal book of Lorenzo Valla on Pleasure (which, with your good grace, we have undertaken to print).⁷³

According to Badius, the problem is that until they have read the last section of Valla's *Dialogue* the intended readers could misunderstand the first two, and therefore the tenor of the whole book. After all, will an audience have the patience to read until the end? The first two sections are contentious, Badius declares, because here Valla

[...] disparages *honestas* and elevates the seductive *voluptas* against all that is right and just and against divine and human law, as though Epicurus himself had never lived or spoken.⁷⁴

In these lines we recognize the distinction – first made in the *Naves* – between the 'true' teachings of Epicurus and the false interpretations raised in the following centuries, where the name of the Greek philosopher is misused to justify uninhibited sensual pleasure. Here again Epicurus is implicitly valorized as the advocate of the opposite, or at least of values in accordance with 'all that is right and just' and which conform to 'divine and human law'.

The title Badius confers on his edition of Valla's treatise is also highly eloquent:

De Voluptate ac vero Bono of Laurentius Valla [...]. In the first book, Leonardus Aretinus is brought in, playing the role of one of the elder Stoics, who are not yet illuminated by the light of faith: to protect honestas [...]. And against him Antonius Panormitanus who – playing the role of the strongly depraved Epicureans – defends the dangerous and more than beastly voluptas, pretending in vain that this is the only Good. In the

⁷³ 'Subvereri non ab re possum, pater reverende, ne [...] ingruere solet calamitas, in hunc nostrum fundum, in hoc, inquam, Laurentii Vallae de Voluptate syntagmate (quod tuo beneficio imprimendum suscepimus) incidat.' The discourse is reproduced in ibid. III, 346–347. In particular, Badius feared opposition coming from 'the more sagacious preachers of the celestial word in the Church and in the community of the faithful, as well as from those who teach the (right) doctrine in the schools' ('argutioribus verbi coelestis praedicatoribus in ecclesia coetuque fidelium ac disciplinarum professoribus in ludis litterariis'). It is not hard to see the reason for Badius' hesitations, since he belongs to the category of booksellers licensed by the Faculty of Theology!

⁷⁴ '[...] honestatem deprimit et voluptatem etiam illecebrosam contra fas, aequum, divina humanaque jura extollit, ut ne Epicurus quidem ipse unquam aut vixisse aut locutus fuisse notatus est', ibid. 347. *Honestas* is the term used for virtue in Stoic philosophy (see above).

second book the same [Panormitanus] pretends, against the Stoics, that there is no good in *honestas*: but he tries to demonstrate an idle opinion. In the third book – the only worthy of being read by a Christian man – Nicolaus Nicolus argues about the false and the real Good: he recommends Christian faith and recalls celestial joy.⁷⁵

This passage demonstrates in no uncertain terms Badius' beliefs and sympathies. Once again, we perceive his aversion to the merely sensual, that is, in his opinion, bestial pleasure as practised by Epicurus' epigones, as well as his profound adherence to Stoic values. Due to favourable comments about Seneca and his doctrines in early Christian authoritative writings, mainly by Jerome, Stoic ethics was generally admitted to be highly compatible with Christian dogmas. The topical characterization of the Stoics, represented as Christians who had not had the chance to receive the Revelation, is significant in this respect. Badius disapproves of Valla's attack on Stoic principles and its tendentious manner of presentation, but approves the third part of the Dialogue, or at least emphasizes its conformity with Christianity.

⁷⁶ Jerome's mention of a correspondence between Seneca and Saint Paul was another factor that contributed to 'cast Seneca in a holy, ascetic Christian light'. The letters speculate on a conversion of Seneca to Christianity, but they are spurious. See Panizza L., "Biography in Italy from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance: Seneca, Pagan or Christian?", *Nouvelles de la République des Lettres* (1984) 2, 47–98; quotation on page 50.

⁷⁷ In the discourse addressed to Guilielmus Parvus, however, Badius criticizes Valla's treatise for not sufficiently disavowing the first two parts of the Dialogue. In addition, he says that the third book readily shows that 'a true theologian discusses divine matters in a much more appropriate way than an audacious literator does' ('[intellegas] [...] quanto decentius theologus verus quam literator audaculus de divinis rebus diputet', Renouard, *Bibliographie* III, 347).

⁷⁵ 'De Voluptate ac vero// Bono Laurentii Vallae [...]. Primo inducitur Leonar// dus Aretinus Stoici cuiuspiam antiqui nec fidei luce illustra//ti partes agens: ut honestatem protegat [...]. Et contra eum Antonius Panormitanus Epicurei per//ditissimi munere fungens voluptatem etiam perniciosam// & plus quam pecuinam defendit: eamque solum bonum esse fru//stra contendit.// In Secundo idem contra Stoicos honestatem ne bonum// quidem esse: sed inane nomen probare conatur.// In tertio (qui solus lectione Christiani hominis dignus)// Nicolaus Nicolus de falso veroque bono disputat: Chri//stianam fidem commendat & voluptatem caelestem commemorat.//', ibid. 346. The names cited here are those of the characters assuming the different parts of the Dialogue in the first version. From the second version onwards (see above), the Stoic, the Epicurean and the Christian are respectively Catone Sacco, Maffeo Vegio and Antonio da Rho. For more details on the different characters and settings of the Dialogue, see Lorenzo Valla, *De vero falsoque bono* xxx-liii.

'Temperantia' and the Senses

In the fourteen years between the composition of the *Naves* and the publication of Valla's treatise, Badius' thoughts regarding sensual pleasure had not really changed. Neither had his approval and defence of Christianized Stoic values. In the *Naves*, one of these values dominates the author's thinking about the senses and the pleasures they engender. It is the cardinal virtue of temperance, which, in the Middle Ages, was thought to correspond with an analogous Stoic *temperantia*.⁷⁸

In the above-mentioned chapter on *Olfactus*, Badius defines the opposite of *temperantia*, that is, intemperance, as the worst of the vices. The Greeks, he states, call those who are immoderate in relation to *Gustus* and *Tactus* 'akolastoi', 'which means debauched and immoderate', and 'akrateis', 'which means without measure'.⁷⁹ In the chapter on *Tactus*, using the words of Virgil, Badius stipulates that,

[...] the use of Venus and of wine is useful, and even necessary: wine to quench thirst, and Venus to assure offspring. But the abuse of both is generally harmful and the cause of great discord and slaughter.⁸⁰

Although in this passage the dangers of a lack of measure are again brought to the fore, the usefulness of *Gustus* and *Tactus* – the association between sexuality (Venus) and *Tactus* being a current one – is also explicitly formulated. The recognition of the value of both of these 'bestial' senses seems to indicate a slightly positive evolution in Badius' thinking about the senses. In a certain way, the cited passage even seems to be a prelude to the ambivalent discourse on folly in the eulogy written by Erasmus of Rotterdam – where Lady Folly actually proclaims that sexual intercourse is necessary for those who wish to

⁷⁸ Seneca is indeed assumed to have written a small treatise on the four virtues, which in fact is apocryphal.

⁷⁹ The passage is part of a long quotation – mentioned by Badius – of Aulus Gellius' chapter on the senses in the *Noctes Atticae* (book XIX, chapter 2).

⁸⁰ '[Quibus verbis innuit Virgilius] veneris et vini utilem, immo necessarium esse usum, vini ad restrictionem sitis et veneris ad propagationem prolis: sed utriusque abusum esse in multis nociuum et magnae discordiae ac caedis causam' (Béné, Nef, 55, 6). The statement seems to recall the Epicurean division, referred to by Seneca at the end of the above-mentioned letter, between natural and necessary desires and pleasures, on the one hand, and natural but unnecessary pleasures, on the other. Both are to be distinguished from the pleasures and desires which are not natural and not necessary. Badius however does not include this part of Seneca's letter.

have children.⁸¹ We should not forget, however, that the use of the senses to sustain the individual and humanity in general had already been legitimized in patristic thought.⁸²

In addition, in the prose sections on *Visus* and *Auditus*, Badius stresses the importance of these senses in the ascension to the Highly Divine.⁸³ In the chapter on *Auditus*, he elaborates on the healing power of music and chanting perceived by the ear. Whether the author is reproducing widespread classical and medieval views on these two 'higher' senses or was influenced by the theories of Marsilio Ficino on cosmic harmony is difficult to say.⁸⁴ The fact remains that at a certain point in both chapters (on *Visus* and *Auditus*) the argumentation changes radically and the author continues his discourse by listing the bad uses of the sense in question.⁸⁵

Continuity and Change: Concluding Remarks

The humanist Badius was definitely acquainted with the changing views regarding the senses and sensual pleasure that had gained ground in some humanist circles. In addition, he was duly familiar with the debate concerning the Greek philosopher Epicurus that occupied Italian humanists, but was also nourished by the increasing popularity of Seneca's writings. This knowledge did not lead, however, to major changes in the author's own conceptions of sensual pleasure,

⁸¹ In chapter 11 of the *Laus Stultitiae*, Folly, who can be considered as more or less equivalent to *voluptas*, declares: '[...] what could be sweeter or more precious than life itself? And to whom does life owe its very beginnings, if not to me? [...] In short, it's to me, to me I say, that the wise man will have recourse if he wants to become a father', in Erasmus D., *The Praise of Folly and Other Writings*, ed. R.M. Adams (New York: 1989) 11–12. On the correspondence between Folly and *Voluptas*, see Panizza, "Valla's *De voluptate ac de vero bono*".

⁸² Jones, The Epicurean Tradition 105.

As we have seen, in ecclesiastical writings such as the *Confessiones* of Augustine the senses of sight and hearing were considered as instruments with which to acquire knowledge of the Divine.

⁸⁴ Badius explicitly mentions the theories of Plato on the subject, Béné, *Nef* 41, 4. In 1518, the translation of Plato by Ficino was published by the Praelum Ascensianum (in collaboration with the Parisian printer-publisher Jean Petit).

⁸⁵ In the chapter on *Auditus*, for instance, Badius first argues about chanting, and then moves from 'chant' to 'enchantment', first in the positive, and then in the negative sense of 'seduction'. While in the chapter on *Visus* the negative part of the argument is much longer than the positive part, the latter being rather short, the opposite occurs in the chapter on *Auditus*.

but ultimately led to a defence of Christianized Stoic values. Even if the author recognized the utility of certain senses in several respects, fundamental modifications were impeded by the fact that his moral and religious thinking was profoundly embedded in the medieval tradition. Badius remained convinced by Modern Devotional thought, and especially by the condemnation of excessive sensual pleasures which led, in this view, to sin and loss of the opportunity for eternal salvation. The medieval idea of the contemptus mundi remained a leitmotif in the Naves and left little scope for new thought.⁸⁶ While in the Naves Badius does not explicitly testify to a distinction between 'old' and 'new' conceptions of the senses and of sensual pleasure, the letter to Guilielmus Parvus proves that he was definitely aware of the issue while presiding over the publication of Valla's De Voluptate (1512). The title given to the Praelum Ascensium edition of this controversial work demonstrates an unequivocal position: evolving conceptions of sensual pleasure are only to be approved of insofar as they are compatible with traditional devotional beliefs.

Badius' religious and moral 'traditionalism' not only affected the *Naves*, but his whole life and work. Thus, Badius' engagement in the propagation of the *studia humanitatis*, and of classical literature in general, remains strongly tied to the medieval inheritance. As such, the author differs from those humanists who rejected 'the way that the classics had been studied and Christian religiosity defined by both their predecessors and their traditional contemporaries'.⁸⁷ In Badius' work, the medieval takes the shape of traditional religious creeds, which – despite movements of religious renewal or reform – maintained their validity long into the sixteenth century and beyond.⁸⁸

With respect to the issue of continuities and discontinuities between the medieval and early modern eras, another striking outcome of the analysis of the notion of pleasure in Badius' *Naves* is the fact that the author's fidelity to traditional, 'medieval' religious views seems to be closely related to a widely accepted conformity between Stoic and Christian values. The still prevailing and constantly increasing popularity of

 $^{^{86}}$ In the preface to the $\it Naves$, the biblical 'Vanitas vanitatum: et omnia vanitas' is explicitly mentioned, ibid. 26, 6.

^{B7} Gewirtz, *Prefaces* 596.

⁸⁸ In his thesis, Gewirtz underlines 'the cultural continuities of western Christendom' and therefore contests the use of the term 'medieval' to designate them, 'since the periodization that it denotes...tends to obscure' those continuities, ibid. 596.

the Roman 'Stoic' philosopher Seneca - whose dramatic works were also much appreciated and printed throughout the sixteenth century, for example by Badius himself – undoubtedly favoured a religious neo-Stoicism already initiated by Petrarch.⁸⁹ For those humanists who, like Badius, envisaged the 'Greco-Roman and Christian civilizations [as] a unified moral and literary culture', 90 the revival of classical literature seems to have reinforced the authority of those medieval religious values which were assumed to coincide with classical thought. Indeed, correspondences between values, role models, and imagery from the Christian and the classical worlds are a characteristic and recurrent phenomenon in Renaissance thought in general. In this respect, the 'medieval' does not necessarily stand in contrast to renewal through a revival of classical literature and culture.

The readership of some classical authors in both the medieval and the early modern eras is also an interesting phenomenon. Seneca proves to be a good example, but, as we have seen, from the beginning of the sixteenth century, Aulus Gellius' popularity also increased strikingly. We can therefore ask whether the frequent reliance on authors such as Seneca and Gellius is to be interpreted as a testament to Badius' medieval disposition or to his humanism, or to both.

The case of Badius' Naves clearly demonstrates the complexity of this period of transition from the Middle Ages to the early modern era, which is often indicated in relevant studies in the field.⁹¹ Here again we are in the presence of overlap, interplay, and continuity rather than rupture. In this respect, Badius' life as a scholar-printer is also pertinent to the discussion. The printer and his printing press – the latter so often considered as an 'agent of change'92 – also proved to be a concrete point of connection between the Middle Ages and the early modern period, not only as a propagator of humanism, but also as a preserver of the medieval inheritance.

Panizza, "Valla's *De voluptate*" 6.Gewirtz, *Prefaces* 600.

⁹¹ See, e.g., Burke P., The European Renaissance: Centres and Peripheries (Oxford: 1998) and Panofsky E., Renaissance and Renascences in Western Art (New York: 1972).

⁹² The expression 'agent of change' is used in the title of Elisabeth Eisenstein's book on the subject: Eisenstein E.L., The Printing Press as an Agent of Change: Communications and Cultural Transformations in Early-Modern Europe (Cambridge: 1979). For academic debate on the question, see MacNally P. (ed.), The Advent of Printing: Historians of Science Respond to Elizabeth Eisenstein's The Printing Press as an Agent of Change (Montreal: 1987).

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FROM HISTORICAL INVENTION TO LITERARY MYTH: AMBIVALENCES AND CONTRADICTIONS IN THE EARLY MODERN RECEPTION OF THE FRANCO-TROJAN GENEALOGY

Tiphaine Karsenti

After the ordeals and adventures, after the revelation and the loss, the king must do two things: preserve the splendour of his city and tell his own story. Both tasks are complementary: both speak of the intimate connection between building a city of walls and building a story of words, and both require, in order to be accomplished, the existence of the other.

Alberto Manguel¹

The present paper addresses the ambivalent and paradoxical reception of a medieval historical theme, the Trojan genealogy of the Franks, in what we might see as two different fields of early modern culture history and literature. From the seventh century on, indeed, several chroniclers related how the Franks – and after them other European peoples - descended from Trojan survivors who, much like Aeneas, had fled from Troy in flames and settled in Western Europe. The invention by medieval chroniclers of a Trojan lineage for the Franks then underwent two distinct fates during the early modern period: whereas several historians had very early on established the mendacity of this famous historical theme, one can observe that this genealogical pattern endured in historical and literary texts or paratexts until the eighteenth century. After having expounded how those two apparently contradictory trends could coexist within the same historical time frame, I will interrogate the relevance of this topic in the context of a reflection about medievalism. Although the resilience of a story originating in a seventh-century chronicle does ascertain some continuity between medieval and early modern representations, the question is to

¹ Manguel A., *The City of Words* (Toronto: 2008) 46. French trans. Leboeuf C., *La Cité des mots* (Arles: 2009) 60.

establish whether this survival can be viewed as a case of medievalism or not: is this theme perceived as medieval by those who still use it in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries? Or is the phenomenon due to another mechanism, making possible the use of this theme without any reference to the Middle Ages? In other words, can we read the actual use of medieval sources as an attempt to build and promote a medieval atmosphere in early modern texts? The issue is raised here with particular impetus by the fact that, although the sources of the pattern are medieval, the content of the myth has nothing medieval in itself; the legend refers more to Antiquity than to the Middle Ages, and we can already assume that humanism can account for the interest for this theme at least as much as medievalism. The apparent paradox in the reception of the Franco-Trojan genealogy could therefore find its ultimate explanation in the mixed references to classical and medieval sources in the humanist practice of history.

Before answering those questions, however, I shall need to explore the survival process of what we could call a historical myth² between the Middle Ages and the early modern period. First of all, it will be necessary to investigate the similarities and differences between history and literature at a time when generic borders were still shifting. By understanding their respective link to veracity, to invention, to morality or to propaganda at the various moments of the early modern period, I will be able to explain why and when a story proven to be false by some historians could still survive in historical, epic or dramatic texts, and it will then be of interest to grasp the formal or ideological reasons for those contrasts. Such investigation shall shed light upon the role devoted to medieval sources in each field and practice, as well as upon the articulation between this case of thematic continuity and the larger issue of medievalism.

My study will be limited to France, a paradigmatic case insofar as the Trojan genealogy originated there. It nonetheless remains obvious that the theme spread widely throughout Europe and that it would be of major interest to trace its destiny in other European countries.³

² On the use of this term concerning the Franco-Trojan genealogy, see Maskell D., *The Historical Epic in France, 1500–1700* (London: 1973) 68, and Dubois C.-G., "La mythologie nationaliste de Guillaume Postel", in *La Mythologie des origines chez Guillaume Postel, de la naissance à la nation* (Orléans: 1994) 115–116.

³ See in particular the studies of Wilma Keesman about the Trojan myth in Middle Dutch literature (until the sixteenth century).

Invention and Propagation of the Franks' Trojan Genealogy in Historic Texts

By the end of the seventh century a secular pattern tracing the European peoples back to Trojan ancestors had already developed in historical texts. Probably based upon the earlier works by Merovingian genealogists using the model of Vergil's Aeneid, this fictitious origin provided France, then a new power in search of legitimization, with a worthy ancestry - one even more ancient than that of the Greeks and Romans - and turned it into the natural heir of the great ancient Empires. The first traces of this notion are to be found in two texts in Latin, the Chronicle of the pseudo-Fredegar⁴ of 660, and the Liber historiae Francorum, an anonymous text dating back to 727.5 Each of these two texts asserts that there is a blood link between Trojans and Franks and sets out to prove so through the etymology of the name 'Franks'. According to the pseudo-Fredegar, this name stems from that of the leader of the Trojan migration after the city was burnt down, a man called 'Francion' (later 'Francus'), a son of Friga. But in Liber historiae Francorum, Emperor Valentinian⁶ nicknamed 'franci' the Trojan survivors who had landed in his Empire 'because of their hardness and boldness of hearts'. The success of these two variations upon the myth was such, during the Carolingian period,8 that other European peoples⁹ followed suit and granted themselves Trojan ancestors as well.

In France, the legend of the Trojan genealogy was durably established and widely propagated throughout the Middle Ages and into the early modern period.¹⁰ For example, in an anonymous

⁴ This text, entitled *Historia Francorum*, appears as a combination of several compilations, among which saint Jerome's chronicles and the ones of his follower, Idace, but also those of Isidore of Seville and Grégoire de Tours.

⁵ For more information about the origins of this myth, see James E., *The Franks* (Oxford: 1988) 235–243.

⁶ 'Tunc appellavit eos Valentinianus imperator Francos Attica lingua, hoc est feros, a duritia vel audacia cordis eorum', in *Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Scriptores rerum Merovingicarum*, vol. II, ed. B. Krusch (Hanover: 1888) 243.

⁷ Trans. by James, *The Franks* 236.

⁸ Hay notes twelve texts reporting this myth at the beginning of the twelfth century, in Hay D., *Europe: The Emergence of an Idea* (Edinburgh: 1957) 49.

⁹ The first to do so were the Britons: they are traced to Brutus, another member of Eneas's family in the anonymous *Historia Britonum* dating from the ninth century. In the tenth century, Dudon de Saint Quentin offers the Normans a Trojan ancestor, and Geoffrey of Monmouth develops the British genealogy in his *Historia Regum Britanniae* from the twelfth century.

Marc Bloch recalls that the modern period's historians were used to reading medieval chronicles, in which they could find precious information about their King's

thirteenth-century text, the Histoire ancienne, the section entitled 'Eneas' opens with a genealogy tracing the Frank people back to Francion, Eneas's nephew, referred to as 'the first seed of French people' ('la semence des François premeraine'). 11 Later in the century, Guido Delle Colonne summarized all the European genealogies at the beginning of the second book of his *Historia destructionis Troiae*, recalling that Aeneas had founded Rome, Brutus Britannia, Francus Francia on the Rhine, Antenor Venice, and Sicanus Sicily. I shall not elaborate on the innumerable occurrences and variations of the pattern during the period extending from its invention to the end of the eighteenth century: Maria Klippel¹² notes 55 instances of this theme between the early Middle Ages and the Renaissance alone, including such well-known authors as Benoît de Sainte-Maure, Jean Lemaire de Belges, Ronsard, or Rabelais. 13 The accumulation of versions of the Trojan genealogy gave rise to numerous variations, among which the most successful were the ones declaring Francion the heir of the royal Trojan family, or the ones going as far as merging him with the figure of Astvanax.¹⁴

After the second half of the fifteenth century, however, doubts began to emerge as to the credibility of this genealogy because it was based on a multiplicity of contradictory versions without any classical text as a confirmation.¹⁵ In his *Jardin des Nobles* of 1464, for instance, Pierre Desgros condemned this deceptive myth of origin, which would have the very Christian King a descendant of heathen ancestors. Although the influence of such questioning remained weak, the movement had indeed been launched and, as was shown by Colette Beaune, it was

lineage: 'Les idées qu'exposent couramment les publicistes royalistes du xv1° et du xv11° siècles paraissent souvent banales à quiconque a feuilleté la littérature des périodes précédentes. Elles n'étonnent que si l'on ne sent pas en elles le long héritage médiéval; pas plus en histoire des doctrines politiques qu'en toutes autres sortes d'histoires', Bloch M., *Les Rois thaumaturges* (Strasbourg: 1924) 347.

¹¹ Visser-van Terwisga M. de (ed.), Histoire ancienne jusqu'à César (Orléans: 1995).

¹² Klippel M., Die Darstellung der Fränkischen Trojanersage in Geschichtsschreibung und Dichtung vom Mittelalter bis zur Renaissance in Frankreich (PhD Marburg: 1936). About the variations on the theme, see also Hay, Europe: The Emergence of an Idea, Dubois C.-G., La Conception de l'histoire en France au XVI siècle (1560–1610) (Paris: 1977), Beaune C., Naissance de la nation France (Paris: 1985), and James, The Franks.

¹³ Concerning the French instances of the theme in sixteenth-century France, see Maskell, *The Historical Epic in France* 68.

¹⁴ For more details about the different versions of the pattern, see the bibliography. ¹⁵ The first doubts about the multiplicity of the legend's versions are to be found in Guillaume Rigord at the end of the twelfth century. See Beaune, *Naissance de la nation France* 27.

lest free to spread throughout Europe: 'Les origines troyennes des nations sont rejetées en Italie dès 1450 et soixante-dix ans plus tard l'Allemagne abandonne aussi les origines troyennes des Francs au profit d'une origine indigène et germanique'. 16

Not until the second half of the sixteenth century did texts asserting the falsehood of the Franks' Trojan lineage multiply and have a real impact in France. In 1569, Étienne Pasquier established a historical synthesis of the Trojan genealogy, which he presented as the main doxa; but then he added an interrogation which cast doubts on what he had reported earlier on:

En premier lieu, que nos premiers Français soient descendus des Troyens, quel auteur ancien de nom avons-nous qui y puisse servir, ou de guide ou de garant?¹⁷

Thirty years later, La Popelinière doubted that Hector had had another son than Astyanax, whose death in Troy had been well established by the classical authors:

Car de donner à Hector un Francion pour fils, c'est espèce de fausseté vers Homère et autres, qui ne connaissent qu'Astyanax pour son fils légitime: et duquel il récite la mort dès les premières furies des Grecs victorieux. Et n'a même parlé d'aucunes troupes sorties devant, durant et après le sac de cette ville pour se retirer en aucun pays étranger. Pourquoi donc se veut-on fantasier le voyage périlleux de ces misérables Foruscits?¹⁸

He then tried to find an explanation for this historical falsehood. He claimed that the fiction had spread with the speed of an urban legend only because it had answered a need or performed a useful role for ancient Franks. The Trojan genealogy was then explicitly associated with a will for recognition by these people. The example of Romans and Gauls would have demonstrated to the Franks that a Trojan ancestry had the power to valorize a nation, and they would then have built the sophisticated genealogies progressively, as their monarchy was being constructed. ¹⁹ By the end of the sixteenth century, the

¹⁶ Ibid. 19.

¹⁷ Pasquier É., Les Recherches de la France, Livre I, chap. VI (Paris: 1903) 17.

¹⁸ La Popelinière, Henri Lancelot-Voisin de, L'Histoire des histoires avec l'idée de l'Histoire accomplie (Paris, Marc Orry: 1599) 404. The word 'Foruscits' means 'exiles'.

¹⁹ Je crois que les plus curieux et oisifs des premiers Francs, ayant ouï comme les Romains, Gaulois et autres rapportaient leur origine aux Troyens que tous avaient en grand honneur: pensant davantage illustrer leur nation qu'ils voyaient croître de

falsehood of the Franks' Trojan genealogy was thus attested and well-established. During the early modern period, a number of texts gives evidence to the generalization of this common opinion denouncing the Trojan genealogy of the Franks as utterly fictitious.

By the end of the seventeenth century scholars were able to give up those fairy tales. But the fact that, approximately a century after La Popelinière, François Eudes de Mézeray, a historian from the late seventeenth century, deemed it useful to state the falseness of the Frankish myth²⁰ confirms that this imaginary genealogy remained alive in memories as well as in texts. Another proof can be found in the famous misadventure of Nicolas Fréret, who was imprisoned in the Bastille in 1714 for having tried to show that the Franks were in fact Germans. As we will see, the evolution of historical science over the course of the sixteenth century can explain the apparently surprising survival of this invented genealogy in historical texts until the beginning of the eighteenth century.

Erudition and Fiction in Historical Methods and Practices during the Early Modern Period

The doubts which emerged in the late fifteenth century about the veracity of the Franco-Trojan genealogy have to be linked with the evolution of historical science over the course of the sixteenth century. Although there was no clear distinction between history and epic

jour à autre de réputation entre leurs voisins, la voulurent aussi coucher au rang des peuples sortis de ces Asiatiques', ibid. 447.

²⁰ 'Les anciens Gaulois et les anciens Germains n'ayant point eu d'annales, ni d'histoires par écrit, on n'a rien des premiers temps des uns ni des autres, que par la relation des Grecs et des Romains, qui en ont dit peu de chose, et encore moins des derniers que des premiers. Ainsi cette suite de vingt-deux rois que le Berose d'Annius de Viterbe nous donne en Gaule avant la guerre de Troye [...] sont des choses pour la plupart fabuleuses, et au reste si incertaines, qu'elles ne valent pas la peine qu'on en parle. Il faut en dire autant de Francus, que le Manethon du même Annius nous suppose pour fils d'Hector de Troye, et l'amène en Gaule pour y être gendre et successeur du roi Rémus; comme aussi des quatorze ou quinze rois que certains faiseurs de contes font descendre de ce mariage, et régner après ce Francus de père en fils', Mézeray François Eudes de, Histoire de France avant Clovis. L'origine des Français et leur établissement dans les Gaules. L'état de la religion, et la conduite des Églises, dans les Gaules, jusqu'au règne de Clovis (Amsterdam, Antoine Schelte: 1712).

fiction at the beginning of the Middle Ages,²¹ a new way of understanding historical research can be seen progressively to have developed, starting from the invention of printing during the second half of the fifteenth century: the longing for erudition then became stronger among chroniclers, so that new historians showed up who rejected imagination and promoted truth. Paolo Emili, 22 a French historian of Italian origin (1460-1529), is considered to be the first of them: relinquishing the legendary vein, he tried instead to understand and explain how politics - much rather than God's intervention - influenced the course of history.²³ At the end of the sixteenth century, La Popelinière²⁴ established a theory of universal history that is symptomatic of this evolution of the historical aims and methods over the course of the Renaissance: 'Deux sortes de personnes ont travaillé à bien former l'Histoire: les uns par imagination, les autres par effet', he wrote.²⁵ He clearly defends here the second type of historians, those who did not use imagination but tried to make words express facts and nothing else. 26 Fable, style and rhetoric are treacherous instruments to him, whereas history should render the truth.²⁷

Nevertheless, during the same period another phenomenon emerged that might be perceived as contradictory with the preceding one: for the first time in French history, chroniclers or poets were hired by kings to write their official lives and works. Two trends then governed the evolution of history writing during the sixteenth century: it started to become a science, proclaiming its difference with fiction and more particularly with epic fiction, but it began at the same time to serve

²¹ See Huppert G., The Idea of Perfect History: Historical Enulition and Historical Philosophy in Renaissance France (Urbana – Chicago – London: 1970).

²² Emili P., Historia delle cose di Francia, raccolte da Paolo Emilio, e recata hora a punto dalla latina in nostra lingua (1515).

²³ About this new historical practice in the sixteenth century, see Huppert, *L'idée de l'histoire parfaite* 16–17.

²⁴ La Popelinière put an end to a movement launched by Étienne Pasquier in his Recherches de la France (1560), followed by Jean Bodin in his Methodus ad facilem historiarum cognitionem (1566), Le Roy in his Consideration sur l'histoire françoise, et l'uniuerselle de ce Temps, dont les merueilles sont succinctement recitees (1567) and Vignier in his Bibliothèque historiale (1587), among others.

²⁵ La Popelinière, L'Histoire des histoires 18.

²⁶ 'J'ai taché de me conformer à ceux qui, plus soigneux de bien faire, sans parader leurs discours que du contraire, ne cherchent tant la faveur d'une éloquence empruntée que de la vérité, recommandée sur tous artifices mondains', ibid. 'avant-discours' 3.

²⁷ About La Popelinière's theory of history, see Dubois, *La Conception de l'histoire en France au XVI^e siècle* 126–127.

political goals.²⁸ This paradoxical development of history is largely due to the ambivalent situation of writers at that time: dependent as they were upon the income that noble lords and rich kings would ensure them, poets and thinkers had to satisfy their expectations, which pertained to the diffusion of flattering portraits of themselves or of past heroes²⁹ more than to the collection of truth. The survival of the Franco-Trojan theme after the end of the sixteenth century in spite of the changing historical methods can then first be ascribed to its political significance. From the Middle Ages onwards, the myth of the Trojan genealogy served as political propaganda, fostering greater unity within the nation. First used by the Church, this myth would then be seized by the princes who saw therein potential political profit. Colette Beaune showed how the Trojan people offered a set of convenient qualities for a nation eager to found and then legitimize its own existence, but also to justify its desire for military and cultural domination over other nations.³⁰ Early modern kings and aristocratic families shared of course this interest in this myth with their medieval predecessors. Official historians or poets could use the pattern, even though it was proven to be false, only to please their patrons.

Historical writing was then divided between two trends: on the one hand, the use of invention, digressions and amplifications, on the other one the refusal of rhetorical effects, the search for erudition and the development of political interpretations. Both of these trends owe something to the influence of the new ideas developed by humanist circles in the second half of the fifteenth century, especially around Robert Gaguin and the Sorbonne in Paris: by reading Petrarch and

²⁸ Before that, history was already used in the service of ideological interests but these were of the Church, not of the State. See Guénée B., *Histoire et culture historique dans l'occident médiéval* (Paris: 1980) 365.

²⁹ About the importance of the past in noble and royal propaganda strategies, see ibid. 333, and Fumaroli, "Aux origines de la connaissance historique du Moyen Âge: humanisme, réforme et gallicanisme au XVI^c siècle" 6.

³⁰ 'Non contents de garantir l'ancienneté et le prestige de la nation comme ils l'avaient toujours fait, [les Troyens] étaient maintenant les garants de sa pureté ethnique et d'une solidarité nationale fondée sur le sang. Ils justifiaient le rang du royaume parmi les nations européennes et face à l'Église et à l'Empire. Alliances et guerres s'y trouvaient en germe dès les origines. Toutes les aventures extérieures pouvaient s'y enraciner, des croisades aux guerres d'Italie et aux prétentions à la domination mondiale. Enfin ces guerriers, devenus tardivement des héros civilisateurs (car la France pourvue de prestige politique se soucia assez tardivement de son identité culturelle), fondateurs de cités, édicteurs de lois et de mots allèrent garantir à l'aube de la nation l'originalité de sa culture', Beaune, *Naissance de la nation France* 54.

classical historians, they rejected the medieval tradition as obscure and in stark contrast with the Greek and Roman enlightenment.³¹ Humanists tended then to promote erudition and truth, but they also tried to imitate the artful style of classical writers.³² They did not reject invention as long as it served rhetoric or esthetic effects. The so-called 'new history' led by La Popelinière then embraced the humanist rejection of medieval obscurity, but opposed the stylistic efforts of humanist historians. Such a fictitious way of writing history, in the manner of old chronicles, declined during the sixteenth century and at the same time different degrees of erudition took hold of history writing: some historians tried to avoid stylistic effects whereas others were attentive to the esthetic qualities of their texts and adopted as their literary models the classical texts, especially the Greek or Roman epics, starting with the *Iliad* and the *Aeneid*. A wide spectrum of historical practices was then to be encountered by the turn of the seventeenth century, accounting both for the survival of the Franco-Trojan genealogy in some texts and for the growing doubts about its veracity in others. Two main factors may have caused the resilience of this pattern: ideology or propaganda on the one hand, literary links to classical epic on the other one. The first reason is related to medieval times, but the second is related to the development of a humanism that rejected the Middle Ages.

The survival of the myth in France at the end of the seventeenth century, however, is a symptom of another evolution in the practices of historical writings that George Huppert emphasized in his *Idea of Perfect History*.³³ The new way of understanding history that appeared in France in the second half of the sixteenth century ran progressively out of steam over the course of the following century: erudition lost its link to history and was severed from the common representation of the past. Some 'antiquaires' (or specialists of Antiquity) were still

³¹ Rabelais formulated this condemnation of medieval works in a famous passage of *Pantagruel*, ch. VIII: 'Le temps estoit encores tenebreux et sentant l'infelicité et la calamité des Gothz, qui avoient mis à destruction toute bonne literature. Mais, par la bonté divine, la lumiere et dignité a esté de mon eage rendue es lettres'.

³² See Guénée, Histoire et culture historique dans l'occident médiéval 351–354 and 365; Lefebvre G., La Naissance de l'historiographie moderne (Paris: 1971) 77–78; and Fumaroli M., "Aux origines de la connaissance historique du Moyen Âge: humanisme, réforme et gallicanisme au XVI^c siècle", Dix-Septième siècle 115 (1977) 5–29.

³³ See the complete reference in the bibliography. For an analysis of this thesis, see Chartier R., "Comment on écrivait l'histoire au temps des guerres de religion", *Annales Économie Sociétés Civilisations* (1974) 883–887.

interested in reconstructing the true past,³⁴ but most of the historians in the service of noble patrons tried to build a glorifying image of their commissioners. Analyzing the propaganda strategies of Louis XIV, Peter Burke does not distinguish between history and literature:

History too has to be regarded as a literary genre. A work of history was expected to include a number of literary set-pieces such as the 'character' or moral portait of a ruler, minister or commander, the vivid narrative of a battle, and the presentation of debates through speeches attributed to leading participants (but frequently invented by participants). Hence there was nothing odd about the appointment of Boileau and Racine as historiographers royal.³⁵

By the time that Racine composed his *Andromaque* (1667), history had more to do with literary fiction than with truth and erudition. Marc Fumaroli describes this evolution in the following terms: 'a double fall: from official historiography to propaganda, from scholarly erudition to immediate conflicts of interest'.³⁶ Propaganda replaced erudition, and the Franco-Trojan genealogy found a new lifeline in the process. After having been mostly rejected at the end of the sixteenth century, it became one of the official commonplaces in seventeenth-century propaganda. The two factors earlier identified as plausible causes for the theme's survival remained relevant one century later, and they were probably even more effective, given this evolution of historical practices.

Literary Use of the Franks' Trojan Genealogy at the Beginning of the Early Modern Period: Medievalism or Humanism?

In order to establish whether or not the reference to the Trojan genealogy of the Franks in early modern French texts constitutes a case of medievalism, I will now consider the literary uses of what was then known to be a genealogical myth during two different moments of the

 $^{^{\}rm 34}$ Particularly the Dupuy Academy with Jérôme Bignon, Pierre Dupuy and André Duchesne.

³⁵ Burke P., The Fabrication of Louis XIV (New Haven – London: 1992) 23.

³⁶ 'une double chute: de l'historiographie officielle dans la propagande, de l'érudition des doctes dans les conflits d'intérêt immédiats'. Fumaroli, "Aux origines de la connaissance historique du Moyen Âge: humanisme, réforme et gallicanisme au XVI^c siècle" 27. Our translation.

early modern period: the end of the sixteenth century with *La Franciade*, published by Ronsard in 1572; and the late seventeenth century with Racine's *Andromaque*, that appeared in 1667.³⁷ As explained earlier, both works belong to very distinct contexts when it comes to the way history was linked to truth and fiction. When Ronsard wrote his *Franciade* the new historians, who were often his friends, had rejected the Franco-Trojan genealogy and erudition was already considered as an important value. When Racine composed his *Andromaque*, on the contrary, history had become a means of propaganda just as any other writing practice and truth was not the main goal of historiographers. Nevertheless, both uses of this mythological theme can be analyzed in similar terms: Ronsard and Racine referred to the Franco-Trojan genealogy in order to glorify the monarch they were serving and fully acknowledged the gap between their practice and erudition.

When Ronsard made Francus the hero of an epic dedicated to Charles IX, the Trojan genealogy was central to a heated historiographical debate raising crucial ideological issues. But by choosing the genre of the epic, the poet could both use the propagandist power of the Trojan pattern and avoid the erudition issue. As shown by David Maskell, there was no contradiction between imagination and historical epic: 'clearly among poets and historians alike, criticism of the *Franciade* for being based on legend was merely pedantic'. Even though historians were developing a new concern for truth and erudition at that time, a poet could write a propagandist epic using a mythological theme without being blamed for it.

By publishing an epic built around the character of Francus, Ronsard joined in all the major mythological representations surrounding

³⁷ Between Ronsard and Racine, one can find other literary uses of the Franco-Trojan theme in France. In 1617 for instance, Du Souhait published an embellished *Iliade*, ornamented by original digressions: when Hector dies, Astyanax is visited by the phantoms of French kings, from Pharamond to Clovis; they tell him that he will be the founder of the French kingdom (*L'Iliade d'Homère* [...] avec la suite d'icelle, ensemble le ravissement d'Hélène [...] Le tout de la traduction et invention du sieur Du Souhait [Paris: 1617]). It seems, moreover, that a tragedy with machines entitled *Le Grand Astyanax ou le héros de la France* was represented at the Burgundy Hotel in 1656, in which Astyanax was saved from death by Jupiter, who transformed him into a shadow. See Jurgens M. – Maxfield-Miller E., *Cent ans de recherches sur Molière* (Paris: 1963) 401–403.

³⁸ Moreover, the Franks battle it out with the Gauls for the ancestry of the French in many historical texts from the tenth century onwards. See James, *The Franks* 236–240.

³⁹ Maskell, The Historical Epic in France 69.

the figure of Charles IX: the descriptions of the royal entry in Paris in 1570 show for example the monarch passing under a triumphal arch at the Saint-Denis gate representing Francion and the first king of the Franks, Pharamond. ⁴⁰ But the poet also personally benefited from the choice of the epic form and its title. At the beginning of his *Franciade*, Ronsard explicitly presented his project as one similar to those of Homer and Vergil. He thus was killing two birds with one stone: by implicitly resuming the medieval model of the *translatio studii* he set himself as the follower of the most recognized poets of antiquity; and in the logic of the *translatio imperii*, he made the French King and his people the heirs of a glorious nation, Rome. He legitimized both the monarch and his own position at the King's side.

The purely symbolic function of the Trojan topic in *La Franciade* was confirmed by the poet himself, when he admitted to not believing in its historicity:

[P]our ne dissimuler ce qu'il m'en semble, je ne saurais croire qu'une armée grecque ait jamais combattu dix ans devant Troie. [L]es fables qui en sont sorties depuis sont toutes puisées de la source de cet Homère, lequel comme fils d'un démon, ayant l'esprit surnaturel, voulant s'insinuer en la faveur et bonne grâce des Æacides,⁴¹ et aussi (peut-être) que le bruit de telle guerre était reçu en la commune opinion des hommes de ce temps-là, entreprit une si divine et parfaite poésie pour se rendre, et ensemble les Æacides, par son labeur très honorés. Autant en faut estimer de Virgile [...]. Suivant ces deux grands personnages, j'ai fait le semblable.⁴²

There then appears a growing distance between a historical discourse rejecting the Trojan genealogy as imaginary and a poetical discourse explicitly using the symbolic virtues of the myth to embellish the image of the monarch and the poet. The propagandist use of the Trojan origin legend was based upon a pragmatic analysis of the rhetorical and ideological system set up by the ancient authors: Homer and Vergil invented stories and wrote memorable poems to please the political leaders of their times. More so than the medieval chronicles, Ronsard's sources were indeed the classical epics by Homer and Vergil.

⁴⁰ See for instance the *Bref et sommaire recueil de* [...] *l'entrée de* [...] *Charles IX* (Paris, Denis Du Pré: 1572) fol. 13r, or Navières Charles de, *La Renommée* [...]. *Poème historial en cinq chants*, chant IV, v. 308–309 (Paris, Mathurin Prevost: 1571) 275.

⁴¹ Achilles and Pyrrhus.

⁴² Ronsard P. de, *La Franciade, Œuvres complètes*, vol. XVI, ed. P. Laumonier (Paris: 1983) 6–8.

David Maskell explains that those ancient poems served both as historical material and as literary model:

Ronsard uses ancient literature in three ways. In one sense they are historical sources. By introducing Neptune's building of the walls of Troy, Laomedon's treachery, the Trojan horse, or the death of Priam, Ronsard accorded the legends preserved in *Iliad* or *Aeneid* the status of historical background. Secondly, Ronsard used episodes or topoi from ancient epic as the building material for the structure of his own epic.⁴³

Using a pattern invented by seventh-century chroniclers, Ronsard was then less concerned with history and medieval times than with antiquity and poetics. The choice of this theme can be ascribed to ideological aims which were the same as the ones medieval chroniclers pursued, and Fredegar is the objective source of this legend, but the Renaissance poet did not try to make his reader conscious of this debt towards the old chroniclers: Francion is more reminiscent of Aeneas than of Fredegar, and Ronsard presented himself as a humanist poet, an heir to Homer more than to Hugh of Saint Victor.⁴⁴

Almost a century later, Desmarets de Saint-Sorlin ascribed the same historical function to heroic poetry as Ronsard had. In the preface to his *Clovis ou la France chrétienne*, another epic about the French kingdom's foundation dating from 1657, he wrote:

Virgile savait l'Histoire aussi bien que les critiques; mais il savait bien aussi jusques où s'étend le pouvoir de la poésie héroïque, qui est si noble et si courageuse, qu'elle ne se laisse captiver ni par les temps ni par les lieux, [...], qui sait piller l'Histoire sans qu'elle s'en doive plaindre, et qui triomphe glorieusement de ses dépouilles.⁴⁵

A link appears here connecting Homer, Vergil, Ronsard and Desmarets, but eclipsing medieval chroniclers or modern historians. When Desmarets de Saint-Sorlin evoked the Trojan genealogy in the second book of his long epic poem, he made no reference to historic sources:

Et du sang de Darpan sortait le fils d'Hector Qui, redoutant les Grecs, dont la haine perfide

⁴³ Maskell, The Historical Epic in France 71.

⁴⁴ David Maskell depicts Ronsard's epic as 'an example of a wholly poetic structure in which the part played by history in shaping the epic was minimal', ibid. 67.

⁴⁵ Desmarets de Saint-Sorlin Jean, *Clovis ou la France chrétienne, poème héroïque* (Leiden, Elzevirs: 1657).

Du rejeton d'Hector croyait être homicide, Avait dès son printemps, sans éclat et sans rang, Du nom de Francion couvert son noble sang.⁴⁶

In this scene, Auberon is showing paintings to the king in order to teach him 'his brave ancestors' origin and exploits' ('la source et les exploits de [ses] braves ayeux'),⁴⁷ which started in Troy. Desmarets also depicted the son of Hector as the ancestor of the Franks,⁴⁸ explaining away his survival by his name change. Being a poet, he deliberately contradicted some historians who had blamed him for writing inaccurate remarks, especially when referring to this royal genealogy. In his letter to monsieur l'abbé de la chambre, dating from 1673, Desmarets evoked this other way of receiving the Franks' Trojan origin:

Tout bon sage estimera un homme bien injuste, qui veut faire estimer cet ouvrage ridicule, et qui par une furieuse envie, veut faire passer les nobles inventions dont je l'ai enrichi, et dont j'ai orné le triomphe de l'Église victorieuse du paganisme, pour des aventures semblables aux livres de chevalerie qui furent condamnés au feu par ceux qui voulurent guérir la cervelle blessée du Chevalier de la Manche. C'est ainsi qu'en parle injurieusement ce rare critique, particulièrement sur le sujet de mon second Livre, où il n'y a que l'origine Troyenne des Français que nos historiens-mêmes disent être venus de Troie. 49

Michel de Marolles, the Abbot of Villeloin, condemned the falseness of the medieval myth which he described as similar to chivalric romances, while Desmarets, who was eager to praise the very Christian King, defended his 'noble inventions' in regard to the medieval romances and asserted the authenticity of the Trojan origin. As long as his story was able to accomplish the purpose he had ascribed to it, that is to say to demonstrate the triumph of Church over paganism,

⁴⁶ Ibid. 17.

⁴⁷ Ibid. 17. This scene is similar to the one in the *Aeneid* where Dido welcoming Eneas shows him the paintings representing the Trojan war.

⁴⁸ Further on, Desmarets de Saint-Sorlin depicted the founding of a new Troy on the Danube: 'Francion secouru frappe, poursuit, abat/ Et la rive gagnée est le fruit du combat./ Voyez qu'il est modeste au milieu de sa gloire./ Il semble moins que tous ému de sa victoire./ Voici la neuve Troie établie en ce bord./ [...] Le noble Francion hâte l'ouvrage ardent./ Et, fondant la cité, qui tient lieu de patrie,/ Du nom du prince ami, la nomme Sicambrie./ Leurs braves descendants, par leurs faits renommés,/ Et Sicambres et francs depuis furent nommés', ibid. 18–19.

⁴⁹ "Lettre de Monsieur Desmarets à Monsieur l'abbé de la Chambre, sur le sujet d'un discours apologétique de Monsieur l'abbé de Villeloin pour Virgile, et de ses observations sur le poème de Clovis", in ibid. 750.

invention was legitimate and could be considered as part of historical writing. Veracity mattered less than truth in this second half of the seventeenth century when history and literature were progressively merging again. The propagandist destiny of historical texts appeared clearly in the mixed references to invention, to the triumph of the Church and to historians' authority.

Furthermore, the case of Racine's famous play *Andromaque*, published in 1667, is interesting insofar as this text does not belong to the epic genre. Why and how did Racine refer to the Franco-Trojan genealogy in a tragedy composed in the first part of the reign of Louis XIV? In *Andromaque*, the young tragic poet⁵⁰ did not hesitate to let Astyanax survive after the siege of Troy, and even to put Andromaque and her son on the throne at the end of the play, regardless of the mythographic tradition. The French King's prestigious ancestor was thus going to be able to rebuild a victorious Troy over the ruins of that of Priam and Hector. When, in 1675, Racine justified this contempt of tradition in a famous passage of *Andromaque*'s second foreword, he referred to the Trojan genealogy and to Ronsard:

Il est vrai que j'ai été obligé de faire vivre Astyanax un peu plus qu'il n'a vécu; mais j'écris dans un pays où cette liberté ne pouvait pas être mal reçue. Car, sans parler de Ronsard qui a choisi ce même Astyanax pour le héros de sa Franciade, qui ne sait que l'on fait descendre nos anciens rois de ce fils d'Hector, et que nos vieilles chroniques sauvent la vie à ce jeune prince, après la désolation de son pays, pour en faire le fondateur de notre monarchie?⁵¹

Even though Racine evokes the old chronicles, this reference goes hand in hand with another, obviously more authoritative, one to Ronsard. In the same way as Desmarets, he uses the term 'liberty' to qualify his invention and refers to the medieval sources and to Ronsard's epic alike. The important point is not to emphasize the truth of this 'liberty', but to underline its legitimacy by quoting other inventive practices which the survival of a Trojan heir represented. Racine did not need to convince his readers that Astyanax had actually rebuilt Troy, but only that they could accept this as plausible because of the literary tradition. The Franco-Trojan genealogy was then part of the

⁵⁰ Andromague is only his third play.

⁵¹ Racine J., *Andromaque*, 'Seconde préface', 1675. Racine, chosen as official historian by the king two years later, gave up theatre and took up propaganda writing in favour of Louis XIV.

French cultural representations, of a 'horizon of expectation' that writers could take for granted. Old chroniclers did not provide any legitimacy regarding truth, but they did concerning what one might call the French set of representations. Medieval texts were part of French culture, as well as the Greek and Roman epics or poems, and quoting their classical content is for Racine a way of presenting himself as the follower of a long line of writers and thinkers who found in Antiquity a source of interest and inspiration. Once again, the use of the Franco-Trojan genealogy does not appear as a case of medievalism but as both a humanist undertaking and a very efficient propagandist tool. It was of course invented by the medieval chroniclers who had the same desire to glorify their nation as Ronsard or Racine to glorify their state and King, and it proved to be very powerful. Both poets also looked for self-recognition and achieved it: the first one was named poet of the King in 1554, the second one historiographer royal in 1699.

First considered to be a plain fact, the Trojan filiation was thus gradually reduced to its symbolic dimension through a process of conflicting interpretations: the blood tie between Trojans and French became a metaphor for the prestigious link between the current King and the ancient Greek and Roman monarchs, and for the artistic tie uniting the contemporary poet with his forefathers. However, one might well doubt that this legend was perceived to be a specifically medieval pattern when mentioned in early modern texts. It seems nevertheless that the reference to medieval times allowed the legitimization of an imaginary counter-history. Having absorbed minds and created a horizon of expectation, the 'old chronicles' provided the monarchy and the nation with a symbolic guarantee. Medieval anchoring was used as an imaginary origin of the royal representations, functioning as an archeaological argument that supported the royal myth in construction. The Middle Ages appeared then both as a dark age when it comes to historical science⁵² and as an authoritative time in the way the French nation represented itself. Like Antiquity, the medieval past seemed to be viewed as a foundation for a humanist culture that based its value upon the antiquity of its tradition, even though a growing eagerness for rationality and modernity tended to discredit this period

⁵² 'Jusque dans la seconde moitié du XVIII^e siècle, pas un livre d'histoire français ne fit du moyen âge une période historique', Guénée B., *Histoire et culture historique dans l'occident médiéval* 10.

of history. The ambiguous reception of the Franco-Trojan pattern is thus symptomatic of the early modern period's wavering between aristocratic and humanist traditions, mythologization and rationalization, the search for the power of images and desire for authenticity.

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EARLY MODERN ANGELIC SONG IN FRANCESCO PATRIZI'S *L'AMOROSA FILOSOFIA* (1577)*

Jacomien Prins

Introduction

When after years of frantic efforts the Italian Renaissance philosopher Francesco Patrizi (1529–1597) was finally appointed professor in Neoplatonic studies at the University of Ferrara, he found himself in one of the most prominent musical centres of Italy: the Ferrarese court. Here he got acquainted with the famous singer Tarquinia Molza, who was affiliated with this court as a professional musician. The story of her exceptional performance practice was recorded in Patrizi's *L'Amorosa Filosofia* (1577), a philosophical treatise in the tradition of love treatises inspired by Plato's *Symposium*. Given that Patrizi, contrary to Plato's philosophy of love, assigned a prominent place to cosmic harmony as well as earthly music, *L'Amorosa Filosofia* can best be studied against the backdrop of another Neoplatonic tradition, the theory of the harmony of the spheres.

In this article, I will argue that the way in which Patrizi deals with cosmic harmony and earthly music in *L'Amorosa Filosofia* exemplifies a major transformation in the tradition of the harmony of the spheres. This tradition was an important component of the world picture in the Middle Ages as well as in early modern times, two historical periods which both determined Patrizi's mind to a large extent. From Pythagoras in the sixth century BC, philosophers, scientists and musicians believed the universe was a stately, ordered, mathematical and

^{*} I would like to thank Dr. Richard Ashdowne for his help with my English.

¹ One of the best introductions to Francesco Patrizi's philosophy is given by Paul Oskar Kristeller in the seventh chapter of his *Eight Philosophers of the Italian Renaissance* (Stanford: 1964) 110–126.

² The first dialogue of the treatise reports a gathering in the style of Plato's *Symposium* held at the house of Patrizio Patrizi in Rome, probably in autumn 1576. For background information on the dialogue as well as on the relationship between Francesco Patrizi and Tarquinia Molza, see the 'Introduzione' of J.C. Nelson's edition of Patrizi's *L'Amorosa Filosofia*, cod. Pal. 418, Biblioteca Palatina Parma (1577) v–xvi.

musical mechanism. The smooth operation of the cosmos created a divine harmony which they sought to capture. Angelic song was the main contribution of the Christian Middle Ages to the Pythagorean doctrine of cosmic harmony.

Patrizi, who was acquainted with the majority of sources from this tradition, used its vocabulary in his ode to his muse, Tarquinia Molza (1542–1617). In fact, much of what is known of Tarquinia's heavenly musical performances is drawn from Patrizi, who taught her philosophy and Greek.3 L'Amorosa Filosofia consists of four dialogues all concerning la Molza, who acts as Patrizi's muse for the exposition of a new philosophy of love and cosmic harmony. The first dialogue is a series of nine orations from a group of musicians, poets, clerics and gentlemen praising Tarquinia's many virtues and skills.4 Patrizi's new theory of the expressive capacity of the human voice to communicate a kind of nonverbal knowledge about the harmonic structure of the universe emerges in the first dialogue. Each of the interlocutors compares Tarquinia Molza to one of the nine traditional Muses, presenting her as a kind of exemplary intelligent, musical and beautiful human being, who is familiar with the Classics and learned in all the liberal arts, the mathematical disciplines and the physical sciences. Patrizi expresses himself in the first part of his book in a conservative oration in which he sings the praises of Tarquinia's intellect. His speech addresses the influence of Saturn on the character of his muse, which is so overwhelming that she is characterized as a rare example of heavenly harmony on earth:5

When we consider these things [i.e. the marvellous world order] as well as the excellence of our Muse [Tarquinia Molza], we can truly say that she is a perfect little world, adorned with all celestial, supra-celestial, and even elemental harmonies, which, being a concord within her and being offered to others as concordant, create a harmony that is unlike the one that these gentlemen [in the eight preceding orations] have described,

³ Patrizi's letters to Tarquinia Molza containing an explanation of the cosmos are published by D. Aguzzi-Barbagli in *Francesco Patrizi da Cherso: Lettere ed Opuscoli Inediti* (Florence: 1975) 13–22.

⁴ The first dialogue takes up nearly half of the manuscript. The second and third dialogues consist of conversations between Patrizi and la Molza about love. The fourth, left unfinished, is an exchange on the nature of marriage between Tarquinia and her husband, Paolo Porrino.

⁵ Given that this planet is traditionally linked up with religious poetry, this is a relatively safe point of view to express in times of the Counter Reformation.

but is like the one they meant and tried to describe, for the matter greatly surpasses both their work and mine.⁶

The question of why Patrizi chose the doctrine of the harmony of the spheres as a framework for his account of the music of his own time is an open and fascinating issue. It can only be answered, I believe, if we take into account Patrizi's epistemology, which is a fundamentally different understanding from ours of what constitutes the cosmos and its connection with music. Through an analysis of his linguistic usage as well as the compositions he refers to in his L'Amorosa Filosofia, I will demonstrate that the magic of the medieval angelic song from the tradition of the harmony of the spheres is transferred to a new musical style: the highly refined and embellished performance practice of the Renaissance madrigal. This study aims at the reconstruction of Patrizi's ideas on the sixteenth century madrigal in relation with the category of the sublime. It is an investigation into the prehistory of the sublime in the context of the aesthetics of music. To my knowledge there is hardly any treatment of the musical sublime in the sixteenth century. In the field of musicology, the sublime is mainly treated as an important aesthetical category in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Music of the Spheres in the Middle Ages

In the Middle Ages, the cosmos was imagined as a harmonious unity. In medieval sources, this kind of cosmic harmony is often referred to as the music of the spheres. The core of the tradition of the harmony of the spheres is a Pythagorean doctrine postulating harmonious relationships between the planets governed by their proportionate speeds of revolution and by their fixed distance from the earth in a

⁶ 'II che considerando noi et considerando l'eccellenza della nostra musa, possiamo col vero dire che ella sia un perfettissimo picciol mondo, ornato di tutte l'harmonie celesti et sopracelesti et anco elementali, le quali et in se stessa concordando et verso altri porgendo concordate, ne fanno un concento, non quale questi signori hanno espresso, ma quale hanno desiderato et tentato di esprimere, sovverchiando la materia di gran lunga l'opra loro e la mia', Patrizi, F. *L'Amorosa Filosofia (MS, 1577)*, ed. J.C. Nelson (Florence: 1963) 72. For the English translation of the quotations used in this article I consulted *Francesco Patrizi: The Philosophy of Love*, transl. D. Pastina – J.W. Crayton (Bloomington: 2003), which is not fully reliable in musicological matters.

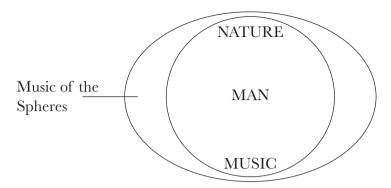


Fig. 1. The medieval harmonic cosmos: man and earthly music are conceived as integral part of the cosmos.

geocentric universe.⁷ Furthermore, it is a belief in a universe ordered by the same numerical proportions that produce harmonies in earthly music. The medieval cosmos is an enchanted unity of divine, immutable essences and man is at one with it. But, unlike the early modern world of Patrizi, the nature of this cosmos is not natural, or at least, what was called 'natural' or 'physical' in these medieval sources was in fact 'metaphysical' [Fig. 1].

Ancient and medieval legends belonging to the tradition of the harmony of the spheres must also have come down to Patrizi, relating how Pythagoras 'discovered' the oldest system of scale construction, which carries his name, i.e. the Pythagorean scale. They alleged that Pythagoras noted the harmonious relationships of the sounds produced by the hammers in a blacksmith's forge (the musical intervals of the octave 1:2, fifth 2:3, and fourth 3:4), and further investigations revealed that the masses of these hammers were, extraordinarily, in simple whole-number ratios to each other.⁸ From this supposed observation Pythagoras is alleged to have leapt to the understanding that consonant sound and simple number ratios are correlated – that ultimately music and mathematics share the same fundamental basis of harmonic proportions.

⁷ For a short and entertaining introduction to the tradition of the harmony of the spheres, see James J., *The Music of the Spheres: Music, Science, and the Natural Order of the Universe* (New York: 1993).

⁸ This legend is handed down, for example, by Macrobius in his *Commentary on the Dream of Scipio*, ed. W.H. Stahl (New York: 1952) 186–189.

This discovery gave Plato cause to formulate in his *Timaeus* a model of the physical universe in which the planetary spheres are organised in a harmonic way. Moreover, in the myth of Er at the end of the Republic, Plato described the universe as a set of concentric rings (planetary orbits) on the surface of each of which a Siren sits singing, and the tones they produce together form a harmonious sound. After Plato's time, this sound was interpreted literally as the music of the spheres, which was audible to but unnoticed by mortals who hear it from birth. The influence of these two Platonic myths was profound and lasting. Later on, the canon of sources of the tradition of the harmony of the spheres was extended with Cicero's Somnium Scipionis. Because of the unparalleled fame of its author and because it was composed in Latin, the scholarly language of all Europe, this source was read continuously from the time it was written right down to the sixteenth century, when it formed the basis of Patrizi's ode to the art of singing of Tarquinia Molza, which we shall examine later.

In the Middle Ages, these myths and dream visions were combined with the Jewish belief in angelic habitation of the universe. This led to the belief in the existence of a new kind of 'celestial music': angelic choirs singing their eternal praise for the Creator of the orderly cosmos took the place of the sirens or Muses inhabiting the planetary spheres in the myth of Er and *Somnium Scipionis*. Furthermore, the seven planetary spheres of the ancient cosmos were supplemented by another set of higher heavenly spheres in order to integrate the Christian heaven, that is, the Empyrean as the dwelling of the Creator and the highest angelic hierarchies. This resulted in a cosmos which can be represented by the following cosmological diagram [Fig. 2].

In the middle of the diagram are located the four elemental spheres, including earth; next the seven celestial spheres, the sphere of the fixed stars (firmament) and on top the sphere of the Empyrean. To the right of the name of every planet appears its period of revolution (for example: the Moon rotates once every twenty-eight days). The planets are in a mutually harmonious relationship determined by the proportions between the speeds of their revolutions. In the upper right corner an assisting angel places his hand on the outer rim of this cosmological

⁹ This medieval transformation of the tradition of the harmony of the spheres is analysed in chapter six, "Sphärenharmonie und Engelsgesang", in Hammerstein R., *Die Musik der Engel: Untersuchungen zur Musikanschauung des Mittelalters* (Bern – Munich: 1962) 116–144.

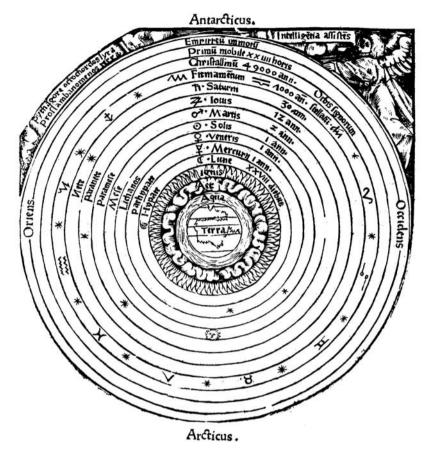


Fig. 2. Universal harmony. From Johann Eck's edition of Aristotle's *Libri de caelo IIII. et al.* (Augsburg, Sigismund Grimm and Marcus Wirsung: 1519), fol. 29v.

model and, following God's order, he applies the force which makes the universe move harmoniously.

In the upper left corner we see a label proclaiming that this is the 'eight-chorded lyre of Pythagoras' and 'earth plays the lowest note', indicating that the cosmos is interpreted in terms of the harmony of the spheres: the note that each of the seven planets plays is indicated in its sphere to the left of its symbol. The total number of notes comes to eight: a full cosmic octave. In addition to this planetary symphony, the cosmos is filled with angelic song. Every sphere is inhabited by a different group of angels and their song fully harmonizes with the speed and accompanying tone of the sphere they inhabit. Angelic song in the

Middle Ages was imagined as an eternal sequence of beautiful harmonies, based on the Pythagorean consonances mentioned above: octave, fifth and fourth. Angels spoke a metaphysical language which was not understandable by man. Only the vowels of holy words (for example, in the word 'alleluia') were fitting to imitate this magical angelic song in earthly music, that is, in medieval monophonic church music.

The Music of the Spheres in Patrizi's Early Modern Philosophy

In Patrizi's time, the view of the cosmos changed drastically.¹⁰ Unlike his predecessors, Patrizi does not approach nature exclusively from the perspective of a theory of metaphysics but is one of the first philosophers of nature who approaches nature as an independent object of study. From a group of letters Patrizi wrote to teach Tarquinia Molza the basic principles of cosmology, we know that he was very well acquainted with the ancient and medieval cosmology associated with the doctrine of the music of the spheres. In 1577, the year he moved to Ferrara, Patrizi sent Tarquinia a letter containing the following cosmological discussion:

Everything from the centre of the world to the outermost surface of the highest heaven including that of the stars or anything else above it, is [defined as] the space of the universe, or the interval or expanse of the whole. Of its own nature this space is immobile and empty. But then it is filled with twelve, or fourteen, spherical bodies, which are the main parts of the corporeal world. They are the following: in its midst and around the centre the earth is located. Above the earth is water, and above the water, the air; above the air, the sphere of fire; above the fire, the heaven of the moon. Above the moon, according to all the ancients, the sun; but according to the astronomers, who say they have made a better investigation of this region with their astrolabes, above the moon they place the heaven of Mercury; and above Mercury, Venus; and above Venus, the Sun; above it, Mars; above Mars, Jupiter; above Jupiter, Saturn, and above it, the starry heaven. More recent astronomers say that above the starry [heaven] there is another heaven, which they call crystalline; and above it the theologians place the Empyrean.¹¹

¹⁰ A short and clear introduction to Patrizi's *Nova de Universis Philosophia (New Philosophy of the Universe)* is given by B. Brickman in his *An Introduction to Francesco Patrizi's* "Nova de Universis Philosophia" (New York: 1941).

^{&#}x27;Lo spatio dello universo, ovvero lo intervallo, over διάστημα του παντος, è tutto quello ch'è dal centro del mondo fino all'ultima superfice del supremo cielo, stellato,

At first sight, it seems to be the case that Patrizi accepted the traditional system of the universe without any reservation. But if we take a closer look at the way he describes the cosmos, many important differences become visible. At first, Patrizi makes a clear distinction between the physical cosmos which is the object of study of natural philosophers and scientists, and a metaphysical cosmos, to which the Empyrean heaven belongs, which is the object of study of theologians. In contrast with many of his predecessors, he attaches just as much importance to the astronomical observations of his contemporaries (for example, of the famous astronomer Tycho Brahe) as to cosmological speculation. In his methodology, space is prior to matter, and therefore the line is prior to number. 12 Furthermore, the expulsion of number as a pillar in the study of nature leads to the consequence that Pythagorean numerology as a pseudo-science must be banished from the philosophy of nature. Patrizi's theoretical point of departure is 'empty space' instead of a traditional cosmos composed of a set of spheres for every kind of being. 13 As a consequence, he seems no longer to uphold the belief in the real existence of physical spheres.

Nearly a year later, on 25 September 1578, while still in Ferrara, Patrizi continued his astronomical instruction of Tarquinia which included further evidence for a drastically different cosmological view. In his explanation of how the planetary spheres can be best imagined, he stresses that one can use the following metaphor to visualise them:

o altro che sia sopra esso. Questo spazio per sua natura è immobile et vacuo. Ma poi è riempito di dodici o quattordici corpi sferici, che sono le parti principali del mondo corporeo. Et sono le seguenti: nel mezzo di esso e intorno al centro è posta la terra. Sopra la terra è l'acqua, e sopra l'acqua l'aere. Sopra lo aere la sfera del fuoco. Sopra il fuoco il cielo della luna. Sopra la luna, secondo gli antichi tutti, il sole; ma secondo gli astrologi, che dicono haver meglio speculato questo sito co'loro astrolabi, sopra la luna pongono il cielo di Mercurio, et sopra Mercurio Venere, et sopra Venere il Sole, sopra questo Marte, sopra Marte Giove, sopra Giove Saturno, et sopra questo il cielo stellato. I più moderni astrologi dicono sopra lo stellato esservi un altro cielo, che chiamano christallino; et sopra questo pongono i theologi lo Empireo', Patrizi, Lettere 15.

¹² Patrizi, Nova de Universis Philosophia, "Pancosmia" 68r.

¹³ One of the best recent studies on Patrizi's philosophy of nature is Deitz L., "Space, Light, and Soul in Francesco Patrizi's *Nova de Universis Philosophia* (1591)", in Grafton A. – Siraisi N. (eds.), *Natural Particulars: Nature and the Disciplines in Renaissance Europe* (Cambridge, MA: 1999) 139–169.

The Moon, implanted in the epicycle like a nail or a knot in a board, is carried by it. It has its own motions, like the three other bigger orbs by which the moon is also carried. It moves with seven motions in all.¹⁴

Patrizi is well aware of the fact that the complexity of the planetary revolutions, including the seven motions of the moon, cannot be explained appropriately if one departs from the belief that planets are fixed in real existing orbits. Only if one conceives of planets as freely moving in space can their complicated motions be explained.¹⁵

The exchange of the metaphysical with the physical in Patrizi's philosophy is accompanied by a kind of disenchantment of the world. If the universe is understood as a combination of empty space and natural matter, this causes a drastic change in the conception of the music of the spheres. In Patrizi's partially naturalistic world view the world is a fractured universe, where the human subject, in pursuit of knowledge, is alienated from the disenchanted objects, creating a gap between man and the cosmos, fact and value, and knowledge and meaning [Fig. 3].

Tarquinia Molza's Song: a Weak Echo of the Music of the Spheres

The second half of this article focuses on one telling symptom of Patrizi's early modern philosophy: the consequences of the 'naturalisation' of music for the tradition of the music of the spheres. At the end of the sixteenth century, Patrizi transferred music in his *L'Amorosa Filosofia* from the medieval *quadrivium* of music, geometry, astronomy and arithmetic to the rhetorical arts of the *trivium*. He made this shift because on the basis of his study of nature he came to the conclusion that the major part of the theory of the harmony of the spheres was in no way supported by observational data nor by rational analysis. He demonstrated, as mentioned above, that the physical existence of circular planetary spheres was a fantasy, and that complex planetary

¹⁴ 'La Luna, fissa nello epiciclo come chiodo in asse, o nodo, è portata da lui, che ha moti suoi propri, come gli altri tre orbi maggiori, da'quali è anco portato. Si muove con moti numero sette', Patrizi, *Lettere* 17.

¹⁵ Patrizi, Nova de Universis Philosophia, "Pancosmia" 91r.

¹⁶ The process of deconstruction of the harmonic cosmos and the accompanying disenchantment of the world is described, for example, in Weber M., *Die rationalen und soziologischen Grundlagen der Musik* (Munich: 1924); transl. D. Martindale – J. Riedel, *The Rational and Social Foundations of Music* (New York: 1958).

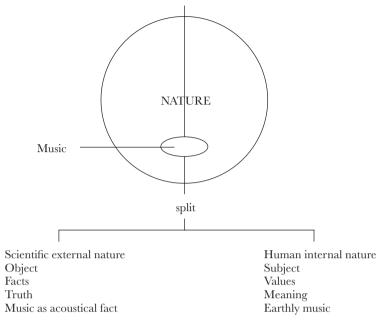


Fig. 3. The early modern world in which the nature of music is divided: acoustical facts of music theory are classified as part of natural science, and earthly song as a rhetorical art.

motion could only be explained if one assumed that planets move freely in space. Self-evidently, the friction of the spheres as a cause of actual sounding heavenly music was only a metaphor for him. Furthermore, he demonstrated that numbers and harmonious proportions were nowhere encountered in nature, and that they were in fact conventional rather than natural in character. Consequently, the same was valid for any theory of a planetary or celestial music.

This transformation in the conception of the world roughly corresponds with changes in the musical tuning system at the end of the sixteenth century. Till the end of the fifteenth century Pythagorean tuning with the three 'magical' consonances was in use. Any kind of

¹⁷ These changes in tuning and temperament in Renaissance music theory are analysed, for example, in Barbour J.M., *Tuning and Temperament: A Historical Survey* (New York: 1951).

earthly music composed or performed in this tuning somehow was an imitation of the harmony of the spheres, because cosmic and earthly music were both included in the same metaphysical structure of the cosmos, which was represented as a cosmic scale (the so-called 'lyre of Pythagoras' in Fig. 2). In Patrizi's time, Pythagorean tuning was replaced by equal temperament, a tuning system in which all pure consonances are slightly altered (i.e. tempered) in order to get a stable tuning system which enables musicians to play polyphonic music together. Hence, the magical power of the divine pure Pythagorean consonances was sacrificed for the sake of contemporary demands of musicians. Since the correspondence between cosmic order and music theory was abandoned to make it easier to make music, earthly music did not automatically express divine harmony any more.

Through the transference of music from the mathematical sciences of nature to the rhetorical arts, the nature of music was divided. First, the music that remained in the *quadrivium* was modernized in the name of natural science; music was objectified as an acoustic fact; it became a natural subject for empirical experimentation and the verification of the ear. Second, the transfer of music from the *quadrivium* to the *trivium* transferred the music of the spheres into the realm of human nature, shifting the magic of the medieval cosmos to the interior world of early modern man. In Patrizi's philosophy, music as a scientific fact of external nature is exchanged for music as the interior, moral power of human nature, that is, of the exemplary nature of Patrizi's muse Tarquinia Molza.

The division of the cosmos in Patrizi's philosophy directly influenced his aesthetics of music. Given that medieval music has lost its power, he had to attribute a new kind of magical power to contemporary music in order to explain music's wonderful influence on man. For this reason music becomes a means to reconstruct the lost world of the harmony of the spheres in his philosophy. Through music man can experience unity with the cosmos. A lost dimension of the normal world is evoked in special musical experiences. Nowadays we are still able to catch a glimpse of what Patrizi understood by these musical experiences, because he gave compelling evidence of them in his *L'Amorosa Filosofia*. Although the treatise is a song of praise for Tarquinia and therefore may not be completely reliable, from the way Patrizi gives an account of her performances it seems he did want to provide as accurate a record as possible.

In imitation of other Renaissance love treatises in which music and astrology have a prominent place, Patrizi attributes a lot of importance to Tarquinia's horoscope. He uses the fact that she is born in an astrologically beneficial hour in his explanation of her musical skills. Her ability to express a kind of hidden knowledge about human nature is explained in terms of an innate talent. In the last oration of the first part of the treatise, Patrizi takes on the difficult task of describing Molza's magical-astrological musical power. Given the unbridgeable gap between descriptive philosophical language and music, he falls back on the traditional metaphor of earthly music as an echo of the harmony of the spheres. In the way Patrizi retells Plato's myth of Er and Cicero's Somnium Scipionis, however, changes in the tradition of the harmony of the spheres emerge which point to a different epistemology, a fundamentally different understanding of what constitutes the physical world and music. But the function of the concept of a music of the spheres, even in the metaphorical way it is used in this dialogue, remains fully intact: planetary music is introduced by Patrizi to grant the music of his own time, especially Tarquinia's song, a 'timeless' magical power:

Nothing but the weakest echo of this harmony reaches human ears down here on earth, or enters people's souls. This does not enter into the souls of all men, of whom the majority have lost their hearing at the highest falls on the Nile, at the cataracts of their passions and material desires, so it only enters the souls of those whose ears are somewhat purified. These souls derive a most sweet delight from it, since nothing in this world down here, but the harmony of this ninth siren of ours – or rather of all those sirens united with her [Tarquinia Molza] – can compare to it. Or rather she so diverts them from their lowly thoughts that – as if their bodies had become like senseless stones – their souls drift behind them and give themselves up to the contemplation of their music, with which this elemental world lives and sustains itself, for scarcely another sensual fruit can be derived from it.¹⁹

¹⁸ The parable of the cataracts of the Nile originates from Cicero's *Somnium Scipionis*: 'The ears of mortals are filled with this sound [of the harmony of the spheres], but they are unable to hear it. Indeed, hearing is the dullest of the senses: consider the people who dwell in that region called Catadupa, where the Nile comes rushing down from lofty mountains; they have lost their sense of hearing because of the loud roar', Cicero, *Tusculanarum Disputationum* I and *Scipio's Dream*, ed. E. Rockwood (Boston: 1903), cf. James, *The Music of the Spheres* 63–64.

¹⁹ Della quale harmonia non perviene agli orecchi humani qui giuso più che una debolissima quasi echo. La quale entra negli animi non già di tutti gli huomini, de'quali la maggior parte al cadere altissimo del Nilo, alla catadupa delle loro passioni

According to Patrizi, in Tarquinia's ability to make earthly music an echo of divine cosmic music, she is imitating the creative power of God. Just as God created the macrocosm, so when la Molza is singing a song, she creates a musical microcosm. In her 'angelic' singing, the archetypal harmonic order of the cosmos is expressed in a metaphorical way. The way she embodies the harmonic world order is expressed in terms of Molza's angelic voice composed of all nine sirens or Muses, who together represent the complete knowledge of the universe. However, Tarquinia is not representing the traditional sciences of the quadrivium and trivium anymore, which were traditionally associated with the Muses. On the contrary, the way in which she is 'adorned with all natural, celestial and even supra-celestial harmonies' corresponds with the renewed order and content of the sciences and arts at the end of the sixteenth century.²⁰ Therefore, la Molza's song is a microcosm of a world which does not resemble the macrocosm anymore, but rather a kind of lost paradise inside the human soul.

Tarquinia's 'angelic voice' still contains the moral ethos of medieval angelic song: it must remind men and women on earth of their task to make themselves better people. Through contemplation of loved ones as well as music, man can transcend the constraints of earthly life:

[...] men could have a veritable portrait and example of how much good is contained in the lowest and highest spheres of the other [i.e. metaphysical] world by contemplating just this one person [Tarquinia Molza]. By loving her and trying to resemble her, and by honouring, worshipping, and serving her, they would become worthy of coming as close as possible to their own bliss whenever that time may be.²¹

et materiali affetti, hanno assordato l'udito; ma di que'solamente che l'orecchie hanno alcun tanto purgate et ne gustano un diletto soavissimo, chè fuor che l'armonia di questa [n]ona nostra sirena – anzi di tutte quelle sirene raccolte in questa – niuna altra di questo mondo qua giuso se le può porre in paragone; anzi sì gli travia da questi bassi pensieri che quasi insensibili pietre divenuti col corpo, con l'animo dietro a loro si disviano, et alla contemplatione della loro musica con la quale questo elementale mondo vive et si sostenta, si danno, chè poco altro frutto sensuale se ne può trarre', Patrizi, L'Amorosa Filosofia 71, 72.

²⁰ Ibid. 72.

²¹ '[...] perchè gli huomini, in questa sola mirando, havessero un vero ritratto et uno essempio di quanto bene in tutto l'altro mondo et basso et alto è rinchiuso; et lei amando et lei tentando di rassomigliare et lei honorando et riverendo et servendo, meritassero di porsi quando che sia il più vicino che potessero alla loro felicità', ibid. 74.

Tarquinia's music is described in this oration as an interior, moral power of her human nature. But at the same time Patrizi endowed her with metaphysical musical gifts, which enable her to be in touch with 'the other world' beyond the world of nature. She represents this metaphysical world: through listening, her audience truly can experience the feeling of being transported to another world, that is, experience the musical sublime.

The Harmony of the Spheres as Experience of the Musical Sublime

The musical sublime was understood by Patrizi in two different ways. Both were inspired by Longinus's *On the sublime*, a source Patrizi had studied deeply.²² In the first sense he treated it in a traditional way as an aspect of rhetoric. According to this view, the sublime is that which is raised up above the ordinary; that which is grand, majestic, 'high' in style. Longinus states that the 'sublime' is a certain 'excellence and distinction of language', and that its effect 'not only persuades the audience but rather transports it out of itself'.²³ According to Patrizi, the 'sublime' in art is

[...] something new and sudden and unexpected which appears before us, creates a movement in our soul, almost contradictory in itself, of believing and not believing: of believing because the thing is seen to exist; and of not believing because it is sudden, new, and neither experienced or known by us before, nor imagined or believed that it could be true.²⁴

In his attempt to define the essence of Tarquinia's musical talent, Patrizi makes it quite clear that it must not be searched for in her rhetorical and technical musical skills, which, while superior, were not uncommon among trained singers. So far as Patrizi is concerned, it is not her ability that makes her exceptional, but her intelligence,

²² For Longinus's influence on Patrizi, see Weinberg B., A History of Literary Criticism in the Italian Renaissance, 2 vols. (Chicago: 1961) II, 784–785.

²³ Longinus, *On the Sublime*, transl. W.H. Fyfe, revised by D. Russell (Cambridge, MA – London: 1995) 163.

²⁴ '[...] adunque nuova, e subita, e improvvisa, che ci si pari avanti, fa un movimento nell'anima, quasi contrario in sè medesimo, di credere e di non credere. Di credere, perchè la cosa si vede essere; e di non credere, perchè ella è improvisa, e nuova, e non più da noi stata nè conosciuta, nè pensata, nè creduta poter essere', Patrizi F., *Della Poetica*, ed. D. Aguzzi-Barbagli, 3 vols. (Florence: 1961–1971) II, 365.

sensitivity, musicality and, most important, her learning. Tarquinia's musical talent most of all consists of the ability of expressing grand thoughts and deep feelings. In the way in which Patrizi connects the sublime with vocal music, a newer sense of the sublime appeals on the boundary between aesthetics and psychology. It represents a turn away from the everyday, in favour of the boundless, of the inexpressible, of transcendence. Following Longinus, Patrizi makes a clear distinction between the sublime and the beautiful. For him, beauty in poetry and song is allied with symmetry and form and as such it is limited and pleasurable. It is associated with the musical level which can be reached by almost 'all women who sing nowadays in the way that is shown by their teachers'.²⁵

By contrast, Tarquinia's musical performances are a source of the sublime, because they are able to fill a listener completely with amazement rather than just with something beautiful. Patrizi reports that because Molza sang 'to the marvel and amazement of those who are really knowledgeable', he himself was transported into higher spheres.²⁶ He explains that during Molza's performances the mind of a listener is so filled with the musical object of song that it cannot entertain anything else. The feeling of being possessed by music gives the listener a feeling of amazement because for a moment he transcends his everyday experience.

Patrizi equates the music of the spheres with a rather modern conception of the musical sublime, which supports the claim that his theory of cosmic harmony is mainly derived from a contemporary musical practice into which this idea is projected. But he presents it the other way round: Patrizi's account of Tarquinia as a kind of perfect harmonic microcosm is presented as merely a kind of reflection. I will try to demonstrate that Patrizi, by projecting traditional concepts of the harmony of the spheres in contemporary earthly music, is trying to load it with a metaphysical content. Therefore, in my opinion, *L'Amorosa Filosofia* can best be interpreted as an attempt to formulate a new kind of musical magic. The rhetorical as well as psychological effects which, according to Patrizi, are used in music to produce the experience of the sublime illustrate a quite instrumental use for music which is new in the tradition of the harmony of the spheres.

²⁵ Patrizi, L'Amorosa Filosofia 40.

²⁶ Ibid. 41.

Now, let us turn to the sublime in Patrizi's description of Molza's performance of some madrigals of the sixteenth century. Given the fact that Patrizi supplies his readers with a lot of detailed information about Tarquinia's musical practice, it is possible to investigate the way in which she was trying to transport her audience. Much of the more detailed information about the earthly aspects of Tarquinia Molza's musical performance is offered by sixteenth century musician Fabrizio Dentice. In one long passage, he explains that la Molza is very well able to perform with ease the embellishments on one syllable, the so-called dimunitions, 'accenti' or 'passagi' which were a very important expressive means in the musical rhetoric of the second half of the sixteenth century [Fig. 4].²⁷

In the way Patrizi uses the term 'angelic' to describe how Tarquinia makes subtle vocal embellishments in her musical interpretations, a clear reference to medieval angelic song can be found:

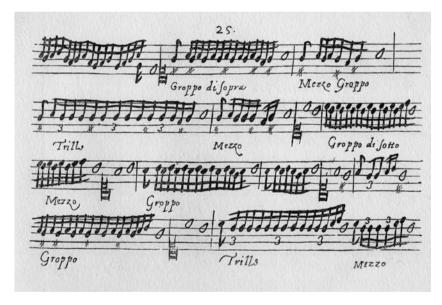


Fig. 4. Dimunitions. From Conforto Giovanni Luca, *Breve et facile maniera d'essercitarsi a far passaggi* (Roma: 1593), facs. ed. J. Wolf (Berlin: 1922) 25.

²⁷ For an introduction into the art of embellishing sixteenth-century music, see Brown H.M., *Embellishing Sixteenth-Century Music* (London: 1976).

So her voice is a soprano not dark, not suppressed, not forced, but very clear, open, very delicate, soft, even, very sweet; in sum, if one may say it without sinning, more than angelic; [...]. Indeed, with the same strength and disposition, I have not seen nor heard any singer nowadays that can come close to her, neither in the aforesaid elements of the beauty of her voice, nor in the discretion and judgement with which she carries it.²⁸

So, the extraordinary musical power lies in the beauty of her voice combined with a kind of intuitive musical knowledge which enables her to express and to communicate the nature of the human soul itself through music, and especially through the rhetorical use of musical ornamentation. In contrast with some of the most famous 'castrati' of the sixteenth century, who were only able to impress an audience with beautiful, but empty virtuosity, Tarquinia is able to communicate her whole interior world to her audience. In the act of musical communication, the listeners are transported by the overwhelming contact with her musical world. Furthermore, it seems the case that Patrizi devalues the musical qualities of the castrati as somehow unnatural, and gives preference to la Molza's natural voice, because he considers a natural voice more capable of expressing human nature itself.

Human nature, however, cannot be expressed through Pythagorean consonances any more, but must be expressed in the musical intervals of equal temperament, which was considered to be more appropriate as a foundation for earthly music at the end of the sixteenth century. Therefore, instead of praising her for using the intervals of the traditional Pythagorean tuning system (octave, fifth and fourth) with their inherent magical power, Patrizi praised her for her intonation, that is, for the way she slightly alters (tempers) the musical intervals (according to the rules of equal temperament) for expressive musical reasons:

It is even more uncommon to find with singers that they express the flats and the sharps with that pallid sweetness that they desire. [...] But singing the quavers and semiquavers in the empty space of the words underneath, whether down low or up high, with such evenness of intonation and with such clear distinction of each one is such a marvellous

²⁸ 'La voce adunque sua è un soprano non fosco, non soppresso, non sforzato, ma chiarissimo, aperto, delicatissimo, piano, eguale, soavissimo; in somma, se ei si potesse dire senza peccato, più che angelico; [...]. Anzi in forza e disposition pari, io non ho veduto nè udito alcun cantante hoggidì che le possa andar al pari, nè nelle parti antedette della bellezza della sua voce, nè nella discretione e giudicio con che ella la porta', Patrizi, *L'Amorosa Filosofia* 39.

thing, that I can well say that my ears never have heard, nor will hear a thing that can ever equal it.²⁹

Patrizi's praise of Molza's intonation can be interpreted as a kind of admiration for the way she is able to modulate from one key to another by using intervals of the contemporary equal temperament, which replaced the traditional Pythagorean tuning system. From this it can be gathered that the music of the spheres in his philosophy belongs to the rhetorical will of a singer: the magic of the traditional metaphysical cosmos is transferred to the realm of human nature which can be expressed by a human voice.

The main device to create musical magic in a song in the second half of the sixteenth century was the application of ornamentation to express subtle and often hidden aspects of the meaning of the words of its text. Ornamentation was used to enhance expressive and rhetorical content, but also to evoke the sublime. Patrizi himself gives some clues, which help to reconstruct the rhetorical and psychological dimensions of Tarquinia's musical performance. He describes, for example, a performance by Molza of the madrigal "Hor che 'l ciel e la terra e'l vento tace" ('Now that the sky and the earth and the wind are silent') of Cipriano de Rore on a text of Francesco Petrarca:³⁰

Now that the sky and the earth and the wind are silent And the beasts and the birds are stilled by sleep, Night draws the starry chariot in its course And in its bed the sea sleeps without waves,

I see, I think, I burn, I weep, and she who fills me with sorrow Is always before me in my sweet suffering, [...].³¹

²⁹ 'Molto più rara cosa è ne'cantanti che i sollevamenti e le diesis sieno da loro espresse con quella ammortita dolcezza che esse vogliono. [...] Ma nel portare le crome e le semicrome negli spatij voti di parole di sotto, o allo in giù o allo in sù, con tanta egualità di intonatura e con sì chiara spiccatura di ciascheduna che è cosa maravigliosa, sì che io ben dire posso che le mie orecchie nè hanno udito, nè [so]no per udire, cosa che più le appaghi giamai', ibid. 39, 40.

³⁰ For a detailed musicological analysis of the performance practice and different versions of the madrigal "Hor che 'l ciel" in the Italian musical culture of the sixteenth century, see Stras L., "Recording Tarquinia: Imitation, Parody and Reportage in Ingegneri's 'Hor che 'l ciel e la terra e 'l vento tace'", *Early Music* 27 (1999) 358–377.

³¹ 'Hor che 'l ciel e la terra e'l vento tace, e le fere e gli augelli il sonno affrena, notte 'l carro stellato in giro mena, e nel suo letto il mar senz'onda giace. Veggio, penso, ardo, piango e chi mi sface – sempre m'è in anzi per mia dolce pena, [...]', Petrarch, *Canzoniere* clxiv.

The phrase 'Night draws the starry chariot in its course', which is associated with the traditional music of the spheres, is not given any special music treatment to express this concept. However, the words 'I burn, I weep' and 'suffering' musically stand out.

In Patrizi's description of Tarquinia's performance of the madrigal "Hor che 'l ciel" not only the rhetorical way she ornamented these emotionally charged words, but also the newer musical-psychological level of the experience of the sublime is addressed. He describes his 'uplifting' experience of her performance of this madrigal as follows:

When she [la Molza] does it [i.e. singing accompanied by her lute], there is no one with such a rude or cold soul who may not be moved and feel all his veins and pulse warmed up, and his soul being filled in such a way that it seems to him that he is among God's angels in heaven.³²

Based on the text, it is not possible to offer an unambiguous answer to the question of what precisely evoked the 'psychological sublime', that is, the feeling of being 'among God's angels in heaven' in Molza's performance of this madrigal. Presumably, it was caused by the way she expressed the emotive content of certain words. But an additional explanation can also be sought in the way she may have exploited a sudden change in the temporal dimensions of the madrigal in her performance. Such a change is a proven sublime effect to throw an audience into transport.³³ Petrarch's sonnet concerns the bitter-sweet torments of the lover unable to sleep, wounded by grief and vet healed by his lady's hand. Conventionally, his troubled state is contrasted with the calmness of nature. It seems plausible that it is precisely in the musical timing and expression of the sharp contrast between the silence of nature and the turbulent and 'noisy' interior world of the lover between bars 36 and 37 that the musical sublime of Tarquinia's performance must be sought [Fig. 5].

It is highly plausible that Molza's primary means of invoking the 'metaphysical' that is a hallmark of the sublime was musical contrast in this composition. Contrasts in music are based on common

³² '[...] al quale atto non è niuno di sì rozzo animo o sì freddo che non si senta commovere e riscaldare tutte le vene e i polsi, empire l'anima sifattamente che le paia di certo di stare tra gli angeli di Dio in paradiso', Patrizi, *L'Amorosa Filosofia* 42.

³³ This sublime effect was often used in music of the eighteenth century and described in contemporary treatises on aesthetics of music. See, for example, Webster J., "The Creation, Haydn's Late Vocal Music, and the Musical Sublime", in Sisman E. (ed.), *Haydn and His World* (Princeton, NJ: 1997) 57–102.

Hor che'l ciel e la terra - Così sol d'una chiara fonte

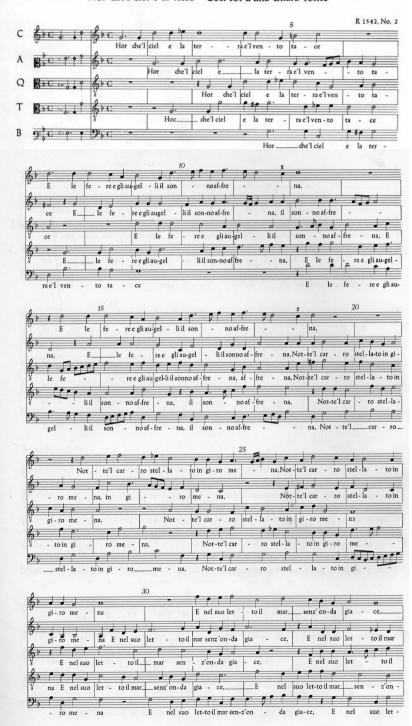




Fig. 5. Cipriano de Rore, Hor che 'l ciel e la terra e 'l vento tace. From Rore C. de, Opera Omnia, ed. B. Meier (Rome: 1959–1977), CMM: 14/II, 4–6.

stylistic elements of the time: rhythm, harmony, ornamentations, and so forth. Such features cannot create the sublime in their own right, but they must occur in an unusual and exposed context. If Tarquinia performed the imagery of the 'silent sky and earth' [bars 1–36] of the beginning of the composition in a distant, unembellished way, and made an abrupt transition in her performance by expressing the troubled state of the lover 'I burn, I weep' [bars 41–43] in a highly expressive and ornamented way, the audience would experience the enormous contrast and could be transported by it completely.

Although we will never be able to fully reconstruct the performance practice of sixteenth century madrigals, the descriptions of special aesthetic experiences in this instance elicit at least a reasonably clear picture of the magic of la Molza's performance practice. Clearly, Tarquinia Molza was an effective and expressive singer able to evoke in her music with her 'supernatural voice' the harmony of the spheres, that is, the musical sublime. Just like the music of the spheres, made up of the heavenly song of the Muses

[...] the sweetness of her [Tarquinia's] angelic voice is moved by many divinities – one could say – that are in her spirit, throat, tongue and lips, and through them rain virtues on our souls through which thoughts, acts, and words are continually created, producing in us an indefinable and sweet springtime.³⁴

Conclusion

On the basis of the reconstruction of Patrizi's ideas on the sixteenthcentury madrigal in relation with the category of the sublime, it can be tentatively concluded that he used ancient ideas on the sublime in the context of earthly music to evoke a lost dimension of the experience of the world. His early modern medievalism, therefore, can be understood as a variation on the recurring historical theme of the search for a lost paradise. The basic belief in Patrizi's aesthetics of music is the traditional idea that music has a content which is somehow similar to the content of the human soul. On the basis of this correspondence

³⁴ '[...] così ella con la soavità della sua voce angelica, mossa da tante, si può dire, deità che sono nello spirito, nella gola, nella lingua e nelle labbra sue, onde piove negli animi nostra virtù, onde si crieno sempre pensieri atti e parole, che in noi fanno una vaga e dolce primavera', Patrizi, *L'Amorosa Filosofia* 36.

between earthly music and the structure and content of the human soul a mental concept could be expressed in music. Furthermore, this concept was somehow imitated by a musician who expressed it, and also by a listener to whom this concept was communicated. If music was imitating good things, especially the beautiful and the sublime, those touched by it, actively as well as passively, would also be imitating and experiencing the good things. Hence, the magical power of medieval music remained intact in early modern times, even against the backdrop of the destruction of the harmonic cosmos as the dominant scientific frame.

Strictly speaking, Patrizi's destruction of great parts of the Pythagorean theory of the harmony of the spheres in the context of his philosophy of nature should have led to the deconstruction of the notions of the harmony of the soul and divine laws of harmony underlying earthly music as well. The logic is quite simple: when the world is disposed of the anthropological projections of heavenly symphonies and angelic choirs, the metaphysical reality of an inaudible music of the spheres cannot be imitated in earthly music any more, because it is dismantled as a purely human conventional theory. However, in order to avoid a complete devaluation of music Patrizi formulated a new theory of musical magic. In this theory, the voice of his muse became a powerful means to re-enchant the world.

Patrizi was blind to some important effects of his own theories, because far from revivifying the miraculous power of music in the ancient harmonic cosmos, his philosophy of nature contributed to the disenchantment of earthly music. The way in which Patrizi transferred music in his philosophy from the sciences of nature to the rhetorical arts, that is, from the immutable structure of the harmonic cosmos to the linguistic plasticity of rhetoric, grammar and dialectics, transformed the expressive character of music deeply. Against the backdrop of the transference of music to the rhetorical arts, Patrizi helped to make music into an infinitely malleable human art to which was attributed the power of rhetorical persuasion. Hence, whereas Patrizi described Tarquinia Molza's art of singing as a kind of reinstatement of cosmic harmony, he did not mean this in a literal way. What Patrizi praised in la Molza's singing was in fact the way she managed to mould the pure intervals of Pythagorean tuning in such a way that she could vocalise her musical inner world and communicate it to her audience. By accurately but freely interpreting the conventions of music theory and equal temperament, Tarquinia could move with the

music and reach a responsive audience. By transforming the harmony of the spheres into the song of the human soul, in Patrizi's philosophy the moral value of music was grounded in an idealised and modern human nature.³⁵

In sum, Tarquinia's interior world is an early modern equivalent of the medieval metaphysical cosmos. She is presented in Patrizi's *L'Amorosa Filosofia* as a microcosm of the lost world of the harmonic macrocosm, that is, of the harmony of the spheres. Just as the music of the spheres which was made up of the songs of angels rained down on the world creating all the things that give it beauty, so Tarquinia's voice rains on the souls of her listeners, giving rise to thoughts, words and deeds that create within her audience 'a beautiful and sweet springtime'. As always in the tradition of the harmony of the spheres, in Patrizi's aesthetics the character of divine cosmic harmony was determined most by its terrestrial imitation.

³⁵ In the sixteenth century especially vocal music is attributed a special magical power. Later on in the history of the aesthetics of music, the idea was established that the human soul could express a metaphysical musical content vocally as well as instrumentally. For changes in the appreciation of music, see, for example, Scruton R., *The Aesthetics of Music* (Oxford: 1997).

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INVOKING THE MEDIEVAL: BETWEEN SCHOLARSHIP AND ARTISTIC PRODUCTION

RABELAISIAN MEDIEVALISMS: PANTAGRUEL AND AMADIS

Paul J. Smith

The French translations of the Spanish chivalric romance Amadis de Gaula constituted a literary hype in the 1540s. The first four books, published by Garci Rodríguez Montalvo in 1508, were translated starting in 1540 by Nicolas Herberay des Essarts, who every year published a new volume, except for 1547, the year in which his most prestigious reader, King Francis I, died. The immediate and longlasting success of the Amadis novels coincided with a rupture and a period of silence in the literary production of François Rabelais. Rabelais published his first book, *Pantagruel*, in 1532, followed by *Gargantua* in 1535. Although he did rework these two books until 1542, Rabelais published nothing new until his Tiers Livre of 1546, which is, as we shall see, a book very different from his first two books, and again in 1552 another, very different book, his Quart Livre. My working hypothesis is that this irregular production can be explained – at least partly – by the popularity of the chivalric prose novels of the thirties, followed by the immense succes of the Amadis in the forties, and the literary debates around Amadis from 1545 on.

This explanation is indeed only a partial one for two main reasons. Firstly, the initial, direct and most obvious literary impetus for Rabelais's literary production was not provided by the chivalric novels, but by a chapbook: the anonymous *Grandes Chroniques de Gargantua*. And secondly, there are, of course, important historical and biographical explanations for the disruptive continuity of Rabelais's literary production. Those explanations – the *Affaire des placards* in 1534 and the death of one of his prestigious protectors, Guillaume du Bellay in 1543, among others – have recently been summarized in a useful article by E. Bruce Hayes with the telling title "A Decade of Silence: Rabelais's Return to Writing in a More Dangerous World". As Bruce Hayes

¹ Bruce Hayes E., "A Decade of Silence: Rabelais's Return to Writing in a More Dangerous World", *Etudes Rabelaisiennes* 46 (2008) 101–113.

rightly observes, the paratexts of the *Tiers Livre* bear witness to this 'threatening, intolerant environment'.²

Perhaps part of the answer to the problem of this discontinuous evolution of Rabelais's writing is more down to earth: between 1535 and 1546 Rabelais did not publish any continuation simply because he had no time. The scarce letters that remain of his correspondence show Rabelais busy earning a living as a doctor and a secretary in the service of Jean du Bellay, and as a kind of 'broker' for his former protector Geoffroy d'Estissac, with no reference whatsoever to his published fictional works, or to any continuation of them. Rabelais seems to be more preoccupied with his social and professional career in the world of humanists and court politicians than with his literary production in the vernacular.³

However, if all these historical and biographical aspects do account for Rabelais's long period of silence, they fail to explain the vicissitudes of his literary production before and after this period.

King Arthur and the Grandes Chroniques de Gargantua

In order to come to a more detailed analysis of Rabelais's creative evolution, it is necessary to begin with the *Grandes Chroniques de Gargantua* (1532), which was re-edited several times between 1532 and 1546.⁴ Although this booklet has been disqualified by the Rabelais scholar M.A. Screech as 'poor stuff' aesthetically, slackly written, restricted in vocabulary and sometimes syntaxically weak',⁵ other scholars, like Mireille Huchon, assume Rabelais himself took part in the production

² Ibid. 102.

³ See my analysis of Rabelais's correspondence: "Correspondance et stratégie d'auteur: les lettres de Rabelais", in De Landtsheer J. – Nellen H. (eds.), *Between Scylla and Charybdis: Learned Letter Writers Navigating Along the Cliffs of Politics and Religion* (1500–1700) (Leiden – Boston: 2010).

⁴ Rawles S. – Screech M.A., A New Rabelais Bibliography: Editions of Rabelais before 1626 (Geneva: 1987) nos. 117–129.

⁵ Screech M.A., *Rabelais* (Ithaca, N.Y.: 1979) 34. These imperfections were probably due to the performance character of the text. Like so many other works of that time, the text was not meant to be read silently, but to be read aloud before an audience by a (semi-)professional performer, who contented himself with a bare, not literarily embellished text, in order to be capable of improvising upon it. For this oral, or rather 'aural' character of similar texts in contemporary Dutch literature, see Pleij H., *Het gevleugelde woord. Geschiedenis van de Nederlandse literatuur 1400–1560* (Amsterdam: 2007) 51, 250–251, 264.

of at least one of its editions, which justifies a more detailed look at these *Chroniques*.⁶

The Grandes Chroniques are a parody of the Arthurian novels: the book deals with the giant Gargantua, whose parents were created by the witchcraft of Merlin the Prophet. The text narrates Gargantua's miraculous birth, the exploits he performed in France, more specifically around Mont Saint-Michel, his great feats of arms in order to help King Arthur against his enemies, and, in the final lines of the book, his transfer to Fairyland, where he and King Arthur are still feasting together in the castle of Avalon. Arthur is presented as an irresolute monarch, badly advised by his counsellors – and this may be a clue to the political message of the book. According to Mireille Huchon, King Arthur probably symbolizes the fastidious but hesitating and irresolute Henry VIII, who was helped by the French King against his enemies. Possibly it is also a satire of Henry VIII's genealogic claims concerning his Arthurian lineage and his pretentions to the throne of France. It was against these pretentions, fed among others by the Grandes Chroniques de Bretagne by Alain Bouchard (five editions between 1514 and 1541), that the figure was set up of Gargantua, related by the royal patron Saint Michel to the royal house of France.⁷

It was this text that Rabelais took as a starting point. In 1532 he published *Pantagruel*, a book about Gargantua's son, taking the same structure of the hero's genealogy and miraculous birth, his education and heroic exploits in wartime, but refining it according to the rhetorical rules of the classical *dispositio*. The twofold comic layer of the *Grandes Chroniques*, i.e. flat parody and political satire, is broadened and deepened by Rabelais in an overwhelming variety of comical material, touching on all topics – law, religion, medecine, politics, philosophy, language, and so on. The English political matters disappear from the novel – only to reappear in the *Quart Livre*.

⁶ Rabelais F., Œuvres complètes, ed. M. Huchon (Paris: 1994) 1175.

⁷ See the comments by Huchon in ibid. 1179–1180.

⁸ Smith P.J., Dispositio: Problematic Ordering in French Renaissance Literature (Leiden – Boston: 2007) 25–42.

⁹ See my "Les âmes anglaises sont andouillettes'. Nouvelles perspectives sur l'épisode des Andouilles (*Quart Livre*, ch. 35–42)" (to be published in the acts of the conference *Rabelais: la question du sens*, Cerisy 2000) and my "De Gestaarte Engelsman en de Beulingen van Rabelais", in Kruif J. de – Meijer Drees M. – Salman J. (eds.), *Het lange leven van het pamflet. Boekhistorische, literaire, iconografische en politieke aspecten van pamfletten 1600–1900* (Hilversum: 2006) 159–168.

Pantagruel and the Chivalric Prose Novels

What is relevant here for the topic of this volume on early modern medievalisms is how Rabelais deals with the chivalric prose novels of his time. Pantagruel's complete title – Les horribles et espouventables faicts & prouesses du très-renommé Pantagruel – ironically pastiches the long and hyperbolic titles of these prose novels. From the very start of his Prologue, he praises them mockingly, by putting together existing and invented titles:

Bien vray est il, que l'on trouve en aulcuns livres de haulte fustaye certaines proprietés occultes, au nombre desquelz l'on tient [Fessepinte, Orlando furioso,] Robert le diable, Fierabras, Guillaume sans paour, Huon de bourdeaulx, Montevielle, et Matabrune. Maiz ilz ne sont comparables à celluy duquel parlons. 10

The two titles between brackets - Fessepinte and Orlando furioso - are later additions by which Rabelais seems to make explicit and underscore the comic devices of his booklist. Indeed, Fessepinte, added in 1533, is an imaginary¹¹ and grotesque title, coined according to the same morphological procedure as Perceforest (penetrating into the forest), combining fesser (smacking one's bottom) and pinte (pint): it underscores the ludic interpretation of the subsequent titles, which, without the help of any other indication, could be read more seriously. The 1534 addition of Ariosto's Orlando furioso - the only Italian title of the list – was meant to underscore both the topicality of the list (Orlando furioso was published in a revised and enlarged version in 1532) and the Italian input in the humoristic treatment of the chivalric mode, thus announcing the role Pulci's Morgante maggiore and Folengo's Baldus were going to play in the Rabelaisian novels, as we shall see. In Rabelais's eyes these amendments were probably necessary because contemporary readers could be inclined to put *Pantagruel* in the same category as the chivalric novels.

Let us return to the titles mentioned by *Pantagruel*'s Prologue. With the sole exception of the non-existing (or in any case unknown) *Guillaume sans paour* (perhaps a contamination – intentional, unintentional? – of the titles *Guillaume d'Orange* or *Guillaume de Normandie* and *Jean sans*

¹⁰ Pantagruel, Prologue. Rabelais, Œuvres complètes 214.

¹¹ The title also figures among other imaginary book titles listed in the Prologue of Gargantua: 'La dignité des braguettes, Des poys au lard cum comment etc.', ibid. 6.

peur or Richard sans peur), the other book titles refer to prose versions of old medieval books, recently and often reprinted, which ultimately would survive in the Bibliothèque bleue. La vie du terrible Robert le diable was printed in 1496 in Lyon, and regularly issued since, as was the case with Fierabras (Geneva: 1478) and Huon de bordaulx (Paris: 1513). 12 The name of Matabrune denotes the mean old woman, known from Le Chevalier du Cygne, printed since 1504 – although her name does not seem to figure in the contemporary book titles. Montevielle (the first printed edition of Pantagruel reads Monteville) refers to the famous traveller-accounts in Le livre appelé Mandeville, printed in France since 1480 (Lyon), sometimes under the name of Monteville. But a less serious explanation of this title has also been suggested: Montevie[i]lle could have been forged according to the same ludic morphology as fessepinte, thus having the obscene meaning of 'mounting the old woman'. 13

In the notes of her edition, Mireille Huchon rightly observes that none of the books mentioned by Rabelais belong to the so-called *matière de Bretagne*, i.e. the tales revolving around King Arthur and his knights. ¹⁴ Therefore, although continuing the *Grandes Chroniques*, Rabelais seems to distance himself tacitly from his source, which depends almost exclusively upon the Arthurian mythology, albeit in a subversive way.

Another important point to realize is the fact that Rabelais's mockeries do not primarily point to *old* books, but to a *recent* literary fashion for printed chivalric prose. In order to situate Rabelais's humoristic references to this literary vogue, it is interesting to note the severe criticism expressed by the famous Spanish–Dutch humanist Juan Luis Vives in his handbook *De institutione feminae christianae*, published in 1524 – a book Rabelais certainly knew and appreciated. Vives explicitly

¹² In his older but seminal study *L'Œuvre de Rabelais*, Jean Plattard lists, between 1500 and 1540, three editions of *Robert le Diable* (Paris: 1520, Paris: 1530, Paris: 1535), three editions of *Fierabras* (Paris: 1501, Paris: 1536, Lyon: 1536), three editions of *Huon de Bordeaux* (Paris: n.d., Paris: 1513, Paris: 1516). See Plattard J., *L'Œuvre de Rabelais* (Sources, Invention et Composition) (Paris: 1910) 2–3. All this information needs to be updated by new bibliographic research, as is clear from the example of *Fierabras*: the 2001 edition of the *Dictionnaire des Lettres françaises*. *Le XVI** siècle lists up to fifteen (!) editions of *Fierabras* between 1470 and 1549. See Simonin M. (ed.), *Dictionnaire des Lettres françaises*. *Le XVI** siècle (Paris: 2001) 22.

¹⁵ See Céard J., "Rabelais, lecteur et juge des romans de chevalerie", *Études Rabelaisiennes* 21 (1988) 237–248, esp. 239 and Huchon's note in Rabelais, *Œuvres complètes* 1237.

¹⁴ Ibid. 1237.

mentions the Spanish *Amadis*, and the French *Lancelot du Lac* and *Melu-sine*, and continues:

All these books were written by idle, unoccupied, ignorant men. I wonder what it is that delights us in these books [...]. As for their storytelling, what pleasure is to be derived from the things they invent, full of lies and stupidity? One hero kills twenty single-handedly, another slays thirty, and still another hero left dead with six hundred gaping wounds suddenly rises to his feet and the next day, restored to health and strength lies two giants low in a single battle; then proceeds on his way, laden with gold, silver, silks and jewels in such quantity that even a cargo ship could not carry them.¹⁵

As a humanist Rabelais certainly agreed with Vives, as can be deduced from the letter on education young Pantagruel received from his father. In this letter Rabelais created the famous opposition between the dark Middle Ages ('Le temps était encore ténébreux, et sentant l'infélicité et calamité de Goths'), which had destroyed all good literature ('qui avaient mis à destruction toute bonne littérature') and the enlightened modern time ('Mais par la bonté divine, la lumière et dignité a été […] rendue es lettres'). In his rejection of the dark Middle Ages, which was at the very basis of the indestructible humanist myth of the 'ténèbres gothiques', ¹⁶ Rabelais would certainly implicate the chivalric prose novel, although he does not explicitly mention it here. However, what Vives seriously ('what pleasure is to be derived') rejected, is turned by Rabelais into a source of merriment by means of absurd exaggeration.

Rabelais's Prologue is built up according to a rhetorical *syncrisis* or *comparatio* in three parts: firstly the books of chivalry are highly praised for their 'occult properties', but – secondly – this praise is set up only in order to underline the superiority of the *Grandes Chroniques* ('Maiz ilz ne sont comparables à celluy duquel parlons'¹⁷). And, thirdly, Rabelais comes with a surprise by declaring that even the superior *Grandes Chro-*

¹⁵ Vives J.L., *De institutione feminae christianae. Liber primus*, eds. C. Fantazzi – C. Matheeussen (Leiden – Boston: 1987) 47.

¹⁶ One finds the same phrasing in Rabelais's dedicatory letter to the jurist André Tiraqueau (1532): 'in hac tanta seculi nostri luce, quo disciplinas omneis meliores singulari quodam deorum [...] e densa illa Gothici temporis [...]'. Rabelais, *Œwres complètes* 979. For the claim that Rabelais was the inventor of this commonplace, see the commentary of Gérard Defaux in Rabelais, *Pantagruel*, ed. G. Defaux (Paris: 1994) 158, note 16.

¹⁷ Pantagruel, Prologue. Rabelais, Œuvres complètes 214.

niques are surpassed by the book the reader is going to read, namely the *Pantagruel*. The prologue, therefore, inscribes itself in the comic genre of the paradoxical eulogy or encomium.¹⁸

The first book of Rabelais contains a lot of parodical allusions to, and rewritings of, chivalric novels, too many to analyze in the limits of this article.¹⁹ I will concentrate upon two episodes: chapter one, about the genealogy of Pantagruel, and chapter 30, which gives a depiction of the underworld.

In the first chapter the ancestors of Pantagruel and Gargantua are listed in the style of the biblical genealogies. Sixty-one ancestors of Pantagruel are mentioned, according to a genealogy that goes back to the literally antediluvian times of Cain and Abel.²⁰ Among the ancestors we find mostly mythological and biblical giants, coming from the compilations of Ravisius Textor, but there are also some giants from the chivalric novels:

Qui engendra Fierabras, lequel fut vaincu par Olivier pair de France compaignon de Roland,

Qui engendra Morguan, lequel premier de ce monde joua auz dez avecques ses bezicles,

Qui engendra Fracassus duquel a escript Merlin Coccaie, Dont nasquit Ferragus [...].²¹

One notes the importance of the Italian mock epics, denoted by the mention of the *Orlando furioso* in *Pantagruel*'s Prologue, especially the *Morgante majore* by Pulci, and the *Baldus* by Teofilo Folengo, or 'Merlin Coccaie'. The case of Folengo, whose importance for Rabelais has been studied by Barbara Bowen,²² presents an interesting example of intertextuality. This mock epic in macaronic style – half Latin, half Italian – is not only a main source of inspiration for Rabelais, but it is also, unexpectedly, by way of intertextual ricochet, *inspired* by Rabelais,

¹⁸ Smith, Dispositio 9–11.

¹⁹ See Céard, "Rabelais, lecteur et juge des romans de chevalerie", and recently Eichel-Lojkine P., *Excentricité et humanisme. Parodie, dérision et détournement des codes à la Renaissance* (Geneva: 2002) 179–200, and Mounier P., "L'héroïsme guerrier dans les *Cinq Livres*: la fiction rabelaisienne au défi des genres", *Revue d'Histoire littéraire de la France* 108 (2008) 771–778.

²⁰ 'The number of generations from Chalbroth to Pantagruel (sixty-one) is thus one short of the familiar number of generations from Adam to Christ (sixty-two)'. Duval E.M., *The Design of Rabelais's* Pantagruel (New Haven – London: 1991) 32.

²¹ Pantagruel, chapter 1: Pantagruel's genealogy. Rabelais, Œuvres complètes 220.

²² Bowen B.C., Enter Rabelais, Laughing (Nashville – London: 1998) 45–53.

because its French translation, published a long time after Folengo's and Rabelais's death, was clearly influenced by Rabelais's language and style. In the title of his book the anonymous translator even labels Folengo as the 'prototype de Rabelais'.²³

The Knights in the Underworld

Another important episode of Rabelaisian medievalism is found in chapter 30 of Pantagruel, which recounts the descent of one of Rabelais's characters, Epistemon, into the underworld. Epistemon, who was killed on the battlefield, and brought to life by magical healing, is therefore capable of giving a detailed account of his visit of the underworld. This account comes from the Greek tradition of the katabasis. The main sources are not only Homer, Vergil and maybe Dante, but especially Menippus, a mock katabasis by Lucian of Samosata (second century AD). The comical point of this mock katabasis is that those who were powerful during their lifetime must now pay in hell for their abuse of power, by exercising all kinds of dirty jobs. The text presents itself as a kind of literary puzzle: it is up to the reader to discover for every one of the eighty mentioned figures why he or she is punished by the job he/she is condemned to do. Sometimes their punishment in the underworld is logically related to their earthly occupations. Thus Cicero is 'atizefeu' because of his swollen rhetoric, full of wind, like a pair of bellows; and water-drinking Demosthenes is condemned to be 'vigneron'. Sometimes their punishment seems to be justified by a simple pun on their names ('Tarquin tacquin', 'Piso paisant', 'Nicolas pape tiers estoit papetier'); in other instances, as we shall see, their punishment is even more arbitrarily imposed by reasons of paranomasis or antithesis with the preceding or following names, and sometimes one has the impression that there is no reason at all. For such a detailed interpretation the modern editions are of little help: their notes only explain the historical background of the persons in question, not the reasons for their punishment. The only edition giving some help in

²³ The book has a long title, of which the first part runs as follows: *Histoire Maccaronique de Merlin Coccaie prototype de Rabelais* [...] (1606).

these matters is an old one: it is the so-called *Edition variorum*, published in 1832 by Charles Esmangart and Eloi Johanneau.²⁴

The order of the list is not arbitrary. Rabelais clearly wants to divide these persons into different categories: Roman emperors, Popes, Greek and Roman generals, mythological heroes, great women of the past, etc. Among the punished persons, there are a number of knights from the Arthurian romances and the *chansons de gestes*, presented in sequences of two or more. The first sequence is composed of Lancelot du Lac and the knights of the Round Table.

- Lancelot du lac estoit escorcheur de chevaulx mors.
- Tous les chevaliers de la table ronde estoyent pauvres gaignedeniers tirans la rame pour passer les rivieres de Coccyte, Phlegeton, Styx, Acheron, et Lethé, quand messieurs les diables se voulent esbattre sur l'eau, comme font les basteliers de Lyon et gondoliers de Venise.²⁵

How can we explain the strange job Lancelot is condemned to do? His relation with horses is evident, because as he is known to be the world's finest knight, he has to be a perfect horseman, and as such 'a dû ruiner et faire jeter à la voirie bien des chevaux', as is laconically explained by the *Edition variorum*. This is in line with what can be read on the website *Timeless Myths*:

None of [Lancelot's] horses, shield or armour had any name attached to them, though his sword was called Secace. Unlike Gawain who has one famous horse [named Gringalet], all his life, Lancelot often used other people's warhorses. He doesn't show the same care for horses as Gawain does; if warranted he would ride them to death, as he did in Chrétien's *Chevalier de la Charrete*.²⁶

More precisely, it is due to this fault that, in Chrétien's version, Lancelot is condemned to ride on the 'charrette', the 'Cart of Shame'. This can also be the explanation of the dirty job of horse-skinner he is condemned to do in Epistemon's underworld.

The precise reason for the punishment of 'all' the knights of the Round Table as meagerly paid rowers is not very clear, although the

²⁴ Rabelais F., *Œuvres. Edition variorum augmentée de pièces inédites* [...], eds. C. Esmangart – E. Johanneau (Paris: 1823). This edition has the disadvantage that the commentary is not systematically given, and not all references to sources are well documented. I thank Julia Szirmai for her help with the interpretation of the list.

²⁵ Rabelais, Œuvres completes 323.

²⁶ http://www.timelessmyths.com/arthurian/roundtable.html#Lancelot, consulted October 24, 2008.

reader easily enjoys the comic absurdity of the juxtaposition of medieval knights, mythological rivers of the Classical underworld, farcical Christian devils, and real-life Lyonese boat-men and Venetian gondoliers. The *Edition variorum* remarks: 'Ceux qui ont vu en France les bateliers joûter au combat de l'oye, ou à quelqu'une de leurs fêtes, savent pourquoi l'auteur fait des bateliers de tous les chevaliers de la table ronde, qui en leur tems avoient été grands joûteurs'. One can add that the Knights of the Round Table are forced to cross numerous waters in numerous ways – and often these crossings can be considered 'rites de passage', like the Gué périlleux, and the river bordering the Other World of the Château des Pucelles, both crossed by Gauvain. The Arthurian knights also cross boundary waters, like the ones bordering Gorre and Avalon (both places of the afterworld).

The same polyvalence is at work in the following allusion:

Neron estoit vielleux, et Fierabras son varlet: mais il luy faisoit mille maulx, et luy faisoit manger le pain bis, et boire vin poulsé, luy mangeoit et beuvoit du meilleur.²⁷

The reason why Nero is condemned to play the hurdy-gurdy ('la vielle') is evident, because he played his lyre while he watched Rome burn, but why precisely Fierabras is his servant, who does 'a thousand nasty things to him' is not quite clear. Maybe he is put together with Nero because he was, like Nero, a cruel persecutor of the Christians, but, contrary to Nero, he was Christianized, and he became one of their protectors. This would give him the pleasant task of punishing the cruel tyrant.

The next three sequences also combine famous knights and obsolete jobs:

- Valentin et Orson servoient aux estuves d'enfer, et estoient ragletorels.
- Giglan et Gauvain estoient pauvres porchiers.
- Geoffroy à la grand dent estoit allumetier.
- Geoffroy de Billon dominotier.
- Jason estoit manillier.
- Don Pietre de Castille porteur de rogatons.
- Morgant brasseur de byere.
- Huon de bordeaulx estoit relieur de tonneaulx.
- [...]
- Jan de Paris estoit gresseur de bottes.

²⁷ Rabelais, Œuvres completes 323-324.

- Artus de Bretaigne degresseur de bonnetz.
- Perceforest porteur de coustretz.
- $[\ldots]$
- Ogier le Dannoys estoit frobisseur de harnoys.
- Le roy Tigranes estoit recouvreur.
- Galien Restauré preneur de taulpes.
- Les quatre filz Aymon arracheurs de dentz [...].²⁸

All those jobs imply a degradation of the knight in question, but for most of them the reader remains puzzled why they have been condemned to this job precisely, and not to another. In some cases, however, the significance seems clear: thus Geoffroy à la grand'dent becomes a match vendor, because in his anger, he had set fire to the monastery of Maillezais.29 Morgant becomes a beer brewer, for the word 'morgant' means 'qui a de la morgue, qui mousse comme la bière', according to the Edition variorum. Geoffroy de Bordeaux is a cooper, for his name rimes with 'tonnaulx', and (or) the profession of cooper was very much practiced in Bordeaux, also according to the Edition variorum: 'Le vignoble de Bourdeaux est fort grand. Aussi y a-t-il dans Bourdeaux plus de deux mille tonneliers'. Perceforest is a firewood hauler, because he had sojourned in the woods, as is indicated by his name. This interpretation is confirmed by the longer version of the 1533 edition of *Pantagruel*: 'Perceforest portoit une hotte je ne scay pas sil estoit porteur de coustrez'.

Other jobs are more arbitrary. Thus, Artus de Bretaigne, also called 'le petit Arthur', seems to be a 'degresseur de bonnetz' for the only reason that his father Jean de Paris does exactly the opposite: he is a 'gresseur de bottes' (one notes the opposition between high ('bonnet' is head-related) and low ('bottes' are foot-related) – an opposition reinforced by the paranomasis between 'bonnet' and 'bottes'. And the four Sons of Aymon are tooth pullers, 'Digne emploi pour tous les mensonges dont leur histoire est remplie', according to an old commentary, quoted (but without a precise reference) in the *Edition variorum*. The allusion made here is to the well-known French expression 'mentir comme un arracheur de dents', already attested in the sixteenth century.

²⁸ Ibid. 324.

²⁹ Rabelais had been a monk at the Benedictine monastery of Maillezais. For the anger of Geoffroy à la grand'dent, see also *Pantagruel*, chapter 5. Ibid. 230.

Seven famous women are mentioned (ten women in later editions), of which three had figured in the contemporary chivalric novels:

- Melusine estoit souillarde de cuisine.
- Matabrune lavandiere de buées.
- [...]
- Helene courratiere de chamberieres.³⁰

According to the *Edition variorum*, Melusine is 'souillarde', 'sans doute parce qu'elle se lavoit tous les samedis dans une cuve' — which is the burlesque version of an important myth. The same kind of joke is made of Matabrune: she is condemned to be a laundress by antithesis: her name could suggest that the color of her skin was 'matt brown', her soul was black, and therefore she was burned to ashes. Helena, once the most beautiful seductress of the world, has now become an old broker for chambermaids.

Just as in the prologue mentioned above, the literary topicality of this episode is remarkable: the names mentioned by Rabelais are not only well known, but most of them figure in the titles of books issued and reissued at the time of the publication of *Pantagruel*. Some of them were even printed by Claude Nourry, *Pantagruel*'s first printer, who published *L'Histoyre de Giglan filz de messire Gauvain* (1520), *Les nobles prouesses et vaillances de Galien restaur* [é] (1525), *Jean de Paris* (1533), and some years after *Pantagruel*, *Ogier le Danois* (1536). To measure the literary topicality of the list one can refer to the *Inventaire de Iacques le Gros*, a manuscript list of one hundred books destined for personal use ('Inventaire de mes livres a lire'), dated September 25, 1533, which contains the first known mention of *Pantagruel*. Here follow the titles which coincide with knights and other heroes and heroines in the Rabelaisian underworld:³¹

- 2. Plus les vj volumes de Perceforestz, relies en iij livres.
- 5. Le premier et ije de Lancelot du Lac.
- 6. Le 3^e de Lancelot et Giron le Courtois.
- 8. Jourdain [de Blayes] et Morgant.
- 18. ij grans livres à la main des iiij filz Aymon.
- 19. Les iiij filz Aymon et Oger.
- 23. Tiglan [to be read as Giglan?].
- 26. Alexandre le Grant.

³⁰ Ibid. 325.

³¹ Delisle L., *Documents parisiens de la Bibliothèque de Berne* (Paris: 1896) 294–296.

- 27. Doolin et Fierabras.
- 42. Artus de Brethaigne.
- 54. Jehan de Paris.
- 59. Geoffroy Grant-Dent.
- 60. Belle Helaine.
- 65. Penthagruel.

The books mentioned after 'Penthagruel' were added later to the list, which indicates that *Pantagruel* was the most recent acquisition in September 1533. The books that follow were acquired later (the last additions dating from the 40s), but some of them could of course have been produced before, or at the same time as *Pantagruel*:

- 72. Ung grand volume de Melusine; perditus.
- 75. Huon de Bordeaulx.
- 76. Godeffroy de Bullon.³²

This list shows us, once again, the literary topicality of Rabelais's medievalism in the *Pantagruel*.

Let us now briefly turn to Rabelais's second book *Gargantua*. This book is in fact a rewriting of the *Grandes Chroniques*. One of the main differences between Rabelais's book and his model is the complete absence of the *matière de Bretagne*. Although the Middle Ages in all its aspects continue to be heavily present in *Gargantua*, as was shown by Jean Larmat,³³ no reference whatsoever is made to King Arthur and his Round Table. One has the impression that for Rabelais the chivalric tales were drying up as a source of inspiration. In rewriting the chapbook of the *Grandes Chroniques* Rabelais was progressively looking for other directions.

Until 1542 Rabelais continued to regularly revise his *Gargantua* and *Pantagruel*. Some of these revisions concern his depiction of the underworld. 'Rabelais suppressed everything that might directly touch the French Crown, by removing Charlemagne, Pharamond, Pepin and the twelve peers of France from the scene. But he conserves his lesser heroes, like Jean de Paris and the "quatre fils Aymon".' Let us keep in mind Rabelais's prudence in matters touching royal affairs, when

³² Other book titles of interest in the context of Rabelaisian medievalism: 7. Sainct Greal. 11. Les iij volumes Merlin. 29. Les trois Maries, Mandeville et Merveilles du monde.

³³ Larmat J., Le Moyen Age dans le Gargantua de Rabelais (Paris: 1973).

³⁴ Andrea Frisch translating and paraphrasing Mireille Huchon in Zegura E.C. (ed.), *The Rabelais Encyclopedia* (Westport, Conn. – London: 2004) 108.

we leave Rabelais for a moment, in order to see what happened in the literary field in the 40s.

Rabelais and Amadis

A major literary event was the publication of the first book of the *Amadis* in 1540. At first sight the intended public was another public than Rabelais's: the folio format and the rich illustrations would have appealed to a much wealthier readership, who was able to buy such an expensive book.³⁵ The topic of chivalry appealed especially to the aristocratic ideals of a young nobility, and the conversations between the characters became a model of courtly conversation³⁶ – and in the 60s, in the Antwerp editions published by Plantin, they even became a model to exercise and perfect the young readers' French. The success of the book indeed was overwhelming: it swept away the 'old' chivalric books, labelled by Plantin as 'un tas de quatre fis Aimont, Fierabras, Ogier le Dannois et tous tels vieus Romans de langage mal poli'.³⁷

One of the main qualities of *Amadis*, according to its translator Herberay des Essarts, was the antiquity of its topic:

[...] pour faire cognoistre à chascun mon intention qui tend à exalter la Gaule [...]. Il est tout certain que [le livre d'*Amadis*] fut premier mis en nostre langue Françoyse, estant Amadis Gaulois, & non Espaignol.³⁸ Et qu'ainsi soit j'en ay trouvé encores quelque reste d'ung vieil livre escript à la main en langaige Picard, sur lequel j'estime que les Espagnolz ont fait leur traduction.³⁹

³⁵ 'un public aisé, aristocratique pour l'essentiel', according to Michel Bideaux in his recent edition of the first book of *Amadis: Amadis de Gaule. Livre I. Traduction Herberay des Essarts*, ed. M. Bideaux (Paris: 2006) 49.

³⁶ Huchon M., "Amadis, 'parfaicte idée de nostre langue françoise'", in Les Amadis en France au XVI siècle (Paris; 2000) 183–200.

³⁷ Plantin, 'Preface', quoted and commented by Selm B. van, *De* Amadis van Gaule-*romans. Productie, verspreiding en receptie van een bestseller in de vroegmoderne tijd in de Nederlanden* (Leiden: 2001) 85. This changing literary fashion can explain why the above-mentioned Jacques Le Gros, from book no 77 on, did not buy any more chivalric novels, except for the three books of *Amadis*, listed with price indications: '91. Le premier et second d'Amadis, 45 s. 92. Le troisiesme d'Amadis, 22 s. 6 d.'.

³⁸ Nowadays, specialists tend to identify the Spanish qualification 'de Gaula' as 'from Wales', not as 'from Gaul (Gallia)'.

³⁹ Herberay des Essarts, *Amadis*, Prologue. *Amadis* 166.

Nowadays critics think that this old fragmentary manuscript was a mystification of Des Essarts, intended to appeal to the nationalist feelings of his readership. This ambition coincides with the opening lines of Montalvo's book – translated from the Spanish by Des Essarts as follows: 'Peu de temps après la Passion de nostre Saulveur Jesus Christ, il fut un Roy de la *petite* Bretaigne nommé Garinther [...]' (my italics), by which the author wanted to credit the book's antiquity, superior to that of King Arthur of *Great* Britain. In a sense the author and his translator are doing here in a serious way what Rabelais had done in a humoristic mode: reacting against the Arthurian myth. Thus the serious old *topos* of the found manuscript, which guarantees the authenticity of the book, was parodied by Rabelais in the Prologue of his *Gargantua*. According to the Rabelaisian narrator, Gargantua's genealogy was accidently found buried in a 'grand tombeau de bronze':

[...] un gros, gras, grand, gris, joly, petit, moisy livret, plus mais non mieulx sentent que roses [...] non en papier, non en parchemin, non en cere: mais en escorce d'Ulmeau, tant toutesfoys usées par vetusté, qu'à poine en povoit on troys recongnoistre de ranc [...].⁴²

The narrator posits himself mockingly as a translator: 'Je (combien que indigne) y fuz appellé: et à grand renfort de bezicles […] la translatay'. The theme of the old book found in a tombstone, and translated painstakingly, resembles the way in which Montalvo presented his fourth and fifth books of *Amadis*:

Et translatant aussi le quart livre suyvant, avec les faictz d'Esplandian, filz d'icelluy Amadis, lesquelz jusques adonc n'ont esté veuz de nul, car l'on les a trouvez par cas fortuit en un Hermitaige, près Constantinoble, soubz une tombe de pierre, escritz en letre, et en parchemin si anti-cque, qu'à grand peine ilz se povoient lire: puis apportez en ces pays d'Espaigne, par un marchant Hongre.⁴³

One sees that Rabelais was parodying the same themes, and using an identical vocabulary and even phrasing as Montalvo and Herberay

⁴⁰ Ibid. 181.

⁴¹ See the comments by Bidaux in ibid. 181: 'Notation passablement floue, mais dont l'objet est d'accréditer l'antiquité de la fable, supérieure à celle d'Arthur de Bretagne et de ses compagnons [...]'.

⁴² Gargantua, chapter 1. Rabelais, Œuvres complètes 10.

⁴³ Amadis 172.

des Essarts had done more seriously in order to accredit their works.⁴⁴ This is also applicable to the public to which Rabelais addressed himself: the hyperbolic apostrophe 'Tresillustres et treschevaleureux champions' of *Pantagruel* in 1532, which some years later in *Gargantua* became 'Buveurs tresillustres et vous Verolez tresprecieux', is aimed at the same public for whom Des Essarts more respectfully intended his book.

All this seems to indicate that Rabelais's laughter at the expense of the chivalric vogue and aristocratic values became more and more displaced. The few corrections Rabelais added until 1542 in order to please the royalist and nationalist feelings of his intended public were probably not sufficient to take away this impression. In 1587, La Noue wrote the following retrospective lines about the imperative success of the *Amadis* novels: 'Sous le regne du Roy Henri second, ils ont eu leur principale vogue: et croy que si quelqu'un les eust voulu blasmer, on lui eust craché au visage'.⁴⁵

Another important claim Des Essarts made more explicitly in the Prologues of the other *Amadis* books he translated was that the books were loved by Francis I, who, during the years to come, never failed to encourage the translator to continue his work. Thus, in his Prologue of 1551, dedicated to Henry II, he wrote: 'Sire, j'avoys par le commandement du feu Roy vostre pere (que Dieu absolve) entreprins de mettre en lumiere toute la cronique du roy Amadis, et estoys sur la fin du huitiesme livre quand la mort donna but à ses jours'. 46 It maybe is no mere coincidence that at the same time, in 1552, Rabelais was also feeling the need to claim relations with the late Francis I. He did so by reminding Odet de Chastillon, the Royal Reader, of the late King Francis's approval: 'le defunct roy François d'eterne memoire [...], curieusement aiant par la voix et pronunciation du plus docte et fidele Anagnoste [i.e. Pierre du Chastel] de ce royaulme ouv et entendu lecture distincte d'iceulx livres miens [...] n'avoit trouvé passaige aulcun suspect'.47

⁴⁴ Or more precisely: '[...] le topos du manuscrit trouvé [...] sert moins à accréditer une fiction qu'à signifier un genre' (Bidaux in ibid. 172).

⁴⁵ La Noue, *Discours politiques et militaires* (Basle: 1587), quoted by Bidaux M. (ed.), "Introduction générale", *Amadis* 68, note 2.

⁴⁶ Quoted by Bideau in ibid. 58.

⁴⁷ Quart Livre, Dédication à Odet de Chatillon. Rabelais, Œuvres complètes 520.

Meanwhile, however, in the midst of his success, Herberay des Essarts received some negative reactions, first of all from his immediate competitors, the other translators. I quote here an interesting reaction by the anonymous translator of the *Orlando furioso*:

Au lecteur

Si d'Amadis la tres plaisante histoire Vers les Françoys a eu nouvellement Tant de faveur, de credit et de gloire Parce qu'elle est traduicte doctement, Le Furieux, qui dit si proprement D'Armes, d'Amours, et de ses passions Surpassera, en ce totallement Avilissans toutes traductions.⁴⁸

One notes, by the way, that this anonymous translator made use of the same rhetorical devices as did Rabelais in his Prologue to *Pantagruel*: he first excessively praises another book in order to then praise his own. Everything in this field appears to be touchy and susceptible of different interpretations. Although the allusion to *Amadis* contained no real criticism, the reaction of Des Essarts was immediate and somewhat overdone: in the same year 1544 he wrote in the Prologue of book V of his *Amadis* some virulent lines against the translator of the *Roland furieux*. 49

Rabelais and Amyot

There is, however, another much more serious attack on *Amadis*. This comes from Jacques Amyot, who, protected and favorized by the Kings, first by Francis I, then by his successors, was to translate the complete works of Plutarch, and who published already in 1549 his translation of Heliodorus's Greek novel *Aethiopica* ('Histoire Ethiopique'). In his Preface Amyot attacks 'la plus grande partie des livres de ceste sorte, qui ont anciennement esté escritz en nostre langue' for lacking erudition, 'cognoissance de l'antiquité, ne chose aucune (à

⁴⁹ Ibid. 22.

⁴⁸ Roland furieux (1544). Quoted by Simonin M., "La disgrâce d'Amadis", Studi francesi 28 (1984) 21–22.

brief parler) dont on peust tirer quelque utilité'.⁵⁰ Amyot elaborates a classic *topos*: that of the healing virtues of literature:

Mais tout ainsi qu'entre les exercices du corps, que l'on prend par esbatement, les plus recommandables sont ceux qui [...] profitent à la santé: aussi entre les jeux, et passetemps de l'esprit, les plus loüables sont ceux qui [...] servent à [...] affiner de plus en plus le jugement, de sorte que le plaisir n'est point du tout ocieux.⁵¹

And he labels the *Aethiopica* 'ceste fabuleuse histoire'. The term 'fabuleuse histoire' is interesting. In fact it is a paradox, because, as is shown by Mireille Huchon, the term *histoire* has to be understood in the rhetorical sense of *historia*, i.e. a 'real, non fictional story'.⁵² A story, according to Amyot, should not be merely fabulous, as are chivalric books, but fabulous and true at the same time: the ideal story being an invented story with a true content. I will briefly return to this topic and to the one of the therapeutical value of literature as well.

For contemporary readers it was clear that Amyot's criticism of the fabulous character of the medieval chivalric books, and their lack of erudition and utility, also applied to the *Amadis*. As is shown by Marc Fumaroli and Michel Simonin, Amyot's argumentation would often be used against *Amadis*: in fact, they announced the end of the book's popularity, 'la disgrâce d'Amadis'.⁵³

Let us now return to Rabelais. Because of the success of *Amadis*, it would be unwise for him to continue by grafting his work onto the chivalric novel. After a long period of silence he published the *Tiers Livre*, a philosophical work, one of the most difficult books of the French Renaissance, inspired among others by the Lucianic and Erasmian genres of colloquy (convivial dialogue) and mock eulogy. The *Third Book* does not contain any references to the chivalric mode. There is however one sentence worth mentioning here, because it seems to be in relation with the anti-*Amadis* reaction of Amyot. In a long, comic description of a marvellous, non-existing plant, the narrator says:

⁵⁰ Amyot J., "Proesme du translateur", in Heliodorus, L'Histoire aethiopique. Traduction de Jacques Amyot, ed. L. Plazenet (Paris: 2008) 159.

⁵¹ Ibid. 160.

⁵² Huchon M., "Le roman, histoire fabuleuse", in Clément M. – Mounier P. (eds.), Le Roman français au XVF siècle (Strasbourg: 2005) 51–67.

⁵³ Simonin, "La disgrâce d'*Amadis*" and Fumaroli M., "Jacques Amyot and the Clerical Polemic Against the Chivalric Novel", *Renaissance Quarterly* 38 (1985) 22–40.

Par ces manieres (exceptez la fabuleuse, car de fable jà Dieu ne plaise que usions en ceste tant veritable histoire) est dicte l'herbe Pantagruelion. Car Pantagruel feut d'icelle inventeur. Je ne diz quant à la plante, mais quant à un certain usaige [...].⁵⁴

Because of the paradoxical context – close to the liar paradox – it is difficult to evaluate the exact meaning of 'fabuleuse' and 'ceste tant veritable histoire', but the terminology is reused in the *Quart Livre*, in a more serious context.

This new book enters again in relation with the chivalric mode, but differently from Rabelais's first books. The Quart Livre contains numerous traces of the Italian mock epic, especially Folengo. There are other epic elements, but they do not come from the medieval chansons de geste, but from classical antiquity, especially Homer and Vergil, and also from the Quest of the Argonauts for the Golden Fleece, the ancient symbol of the Burgundian court.⁵⁵ This quest is now replaced by the superior royalist and Gallic quest of Pantagruel and his companion Panurge, who are searching not for a Golden Fleece, but for the Dive Bouteille. This Dive Bouteille is the only apparent remnant of the chivalric novel, because it can be read as a parodic reversal of the Holy Grail – the 'Saint Graal'. There is an intriguing etymological pun on the 'Saint Graal' by the coinage 'Sangreal' i.e. 'Royal Blood' or 'Real Blood', i.e. Blood of Christ, which figures in an especially burlesque context, namely to praise the healing power of the mustard defecated by a flying boar named Sus Minerva.⁵⁶

In order to present his book to his patron, Cardinal Odet de Chatillon, Rabelais advances the following argument:

[...] je suis journellement stipulé, requis, et importuné pour la continuation des mythologies Pantagruelicques: alleguans que plusieurs gens langoureux, malades, ou autrement faschez et desolez avoient à la lecture d'icelles trompé leurs ennuictz, temps jouyeusement passé, et repceu alaigresse et consolation nouvelle.⁵⁷

This closely reminds us of the text of Amyot. The therapeutical value of literature, which will be enormously elaborated by Rabelais in all the paratexts of the *Quart Livre*, is of course a commonplace; so one

⁵⁴ Tiers Livre, chapter 51. Rabelais, Œuvres complètes 505.

⁵⁵ See Mireille Huchon in ibid. 1461–1463.

⁵⁶ Ibid. 637. See Duval E.M., "La messe, la Cène, et le voyage sans fin du *Quart Livre*", *Etudes Rabelaisiennes* 21 (1988) 135–136.

⁵⁷ Quart Livre, Dédication à Odet de Chatillon. Rabelais, Œuvres complètes 518.

cannot prove that this is a direct borrowing from Amyot, but both Amyot and Rabelais are very close to each other. This can also be seen in Rabelais's use of the word *mythologies*. In the *Briefve declaration*, an anonymous list, maybe written by Rabelais himself, and attached to some copies of the 1552 edition of the *Quart Livre*, the very first word glossed is *mythologies*:

Mythologies. Fabuleuses narrations. C'est une diction Grecque.⁵⁸

According to Mireille Huchon, this use of the word *fabuleuses* in combination with *narration* has the same connotative value as Amyot's *histoire fabuleuse*, that is to say a positive one at the expense of the chivalric mode.

The *Quart Livre* even contains a more direct allusion to the *Aethiopica*, although its context is rather ambiguous. The episode in question recounts a period of dead calm and inactivity. Pantagruel and his company are weary:

Et restions tous pensifs, matagrabolisez, sesolfiez, et faschez: sans mot dire les uns aux aultres. Pantagruel tenent un Heliodore Grec en main sus un transpontin au bout des Escoutilles sommeilloit. Telle estoit sa coustume, que trop mieulx par livre dormoit, que par coeur.⁵⁹

This passage is typical of the difficulties posed by the interpretation of Rabelais's text. What is he criticizing? The fact that Pantagruel is reading a Greek version of Heliodorus, instead of the French translation by Amyot? This is unlikely, because Pantagruel reads and speaks Greek fluently. Or is it the book of Heliodorus itself: its subject, its structure, and, especially, its much-praised disposition?

Dispositional Renewal of Amyot and Rabelais

This leads us to the narrative techniques proper to the chivalric novel, including *Amadis*, and the reactions to it of both Amyot and Rabelais. In a crucial passage Amyot explains in a particularly lucid way to his readership the narrative novelty of the *Aethiopica*:

⁵⁸ Quart Livre. Ibid. 703.

⁵⁹ Quart Livre, chapter 63. Ibid. 678.

Mais surtout la disposition en est singuliere: car il commence au mylieu de son histoire, comme font les Poëtes Heroïques. Ce qui cause de prime face un grand esbahissement aux lecteurs, et leur engendre un passionné desir d'entendre le commencement: et toutefois il les tire si bien par l'ingenieuse liaison de son conte, que l'on trouve tout au commencement du premier livre jusques à ce que l'on ait leu la fin du cinquiesme. Et quand on en est là venu, encore a l'on plus grande envie de voir la fin, que l'on n'avoit auparavant d'en voir le commencement: De sorte que toujours l'entendement demeure suspendu, jusques à ce que l'on vienne à la conclusion, laquelle laisse le lecteur satisfaict, de la sorte que le sont ceux, qui à la fin viennent à jouyr d'un bien ardemment desiré, et longuement attendu.⁶⁰

Amyot probably wants to distinguish this suspense-building from the technique of *entrelacement*, the interwoven presentation of two or more simultaneous actions. This was a technique highly praised and much applied since Chrétien de Troyes's novels, and would be one of the main characteristics of the *Amadis* novels. Amyot, however, criticizes them severely:

[...] encore sont ilz le plus souvent si mal cousuz et si esloignez de toute vraysemblable apparence, qu'il semble que ce soyent plustost songes de quelque malade resvant en fievre chaude, qu'inventions d'aucun homme d'esprit, et de jugement.⁶¹

It is possible to consider the discontinuous evolution of the Rabelaisian novels, and more specifically his changing treatment of narrative structures, as a kind of positioning against the narrative techniques of both the chivalric novel (including *Amadis*) and the *Aethiopica*. The *Pantagruel* shows a tendency to parody the *entrelacement* by making fun of its stock formula: 'Laissons icy Pantagruel avecques ses apostoles. Et parlons du roy Anarche et de son armée', ⁶² followed some lines later by 'Maintenant retournons⁶³ au bon Pantagruel: et racontons comment il se porta en cest affaire'. ⁶⁴ This episode is concluded by another epic stock formula, but now taken from the classical epos of the Homeric tradition:

⁶⁰ Amyot, "Proesme du translateur" 160–161.

⁶¹ Ibid. 159.

⁶² Pantagruel, chapter 28. Rabelais, Œuvres complètes 312.

⁶³ 'Formule traditionnelle des romans de chevalerie', according to Mireille Huchon in ibid. 1323.

⁶⁴ Pantagruel, chapter 28. Ibid. 313.

O qui pourra maintenant racompter comment se porta Pantagruel contre les troys cens geans.

O ma muse, ma Calliope, ma Thalie inspire moy à ceste heure [...].⁶⁵

Moreover, *entrelacement* is ridiculed by the presentation of two absurd cases of this technique. The first one is the depiction of the underworld discussed above. Epistemon's miraculous resuscitation enables him to report in a long flashback his experiences in the underworld, and to describe the topsy-turvy world he found there. The other, even more curious case is given in chapter 32 of Pantagruel, where Rabelais makes his narrator Alcofrybas sojourn for half a year in Pantagruel's mouth. Meanwhile, the war has ended, leading to the decisive victory of Pantagruel's army, as is briefly reported by Pantagruel to Alcofrybas when he finally manages to come out of the giant's mouth. In Gargantua Rabelais does not seem to want to parody the entrelacement technique, but to outdo it. He indeed makes a virtuoso use of the technique of entrelacement, by complicating the narration in presenting not two but four simultaneous actions. In Gargantua, chapter 28, frère Jean's heroic exploits in his defense of his vineyard are related to Picrochole's strategic moves by the opening sentence 'Ce pendent que le moine s'escarmouchoit comme avons dict contre ceulx qui estoient entrez le clous, Picrochole à grande hastivité passa le gué de Vede [...]' – and these tumultuous events are linked some lines further to two quiet and peaceful simultaneous actions: Gargantua's study of 'bonnes lettres et exercitations athletiques' and the rustic, easygoing life of his father Grandgousier. This last *entrelacement* is effectuated by a stock formula: 'Or laissons les là, et retournons à nostre bon Gargantua [...]'. And more generally, the whole episode is built up according to a series of rapidly changes of scene, a series of micro-entrelacements, meant to outdo the more heavy-handed use of this technique in the chivalric novels.

However, in his *Tiers* and *Quart Livres*, Rabelais is neither willing to follow the *entrelacement* of the chivalric novel nor Amyot's example of suspense-building. Instead, he is clearly experimenting with new, more sophisticated ways of narration, by building up a structure of concentric inclusion, according to the formula A1–B1–C1–D–C2–B2–A2.⁶⁶

⁶⁵ Pantagruel, chapter 28. Ibid. 315.

⁶⁶ See Duval E.M., *The Design of Rabelais's* Tiers Livre de Pantagruel (Geneva: 1997) and Duval E.M., *The Design of Rabelais's* Quart Livre de Pantagruel (Geneva: 1998).

This sophisticated structure invites the reader not only to satisfy his curiosity by reading until the end, but also by reading and interpreting backwards in a retrospective, and in fact centripetal way. This is, indeed, the reverse of Amyot's narrative model, which is centrifugal, directing the reader's curiosity backwards to the beginning of the story and forwards to its end.

On the micro level of the episode, this centripetal way of reading is corroborated in the *Tiers* and *Quart Livres* by the technique of narrative imbrication: a person A tells the story of person A (his own story) or B (another person's story). The most elaborate form of this technique is to be found in the Chicquanous episode (*Quart Livre*, chapter 13) of which I quote here Jerome Schwartz's succinct synthesis:⁶⁷

The Chicquanous narrative proper is structured within a series of nested enunciative layers, as in the following diagram:

[A B C [Villon exemplum] C B A]

Where:

A = Chicquanous episode.

B = Panurge's narrative of noces de Basché.

C = Basché's narrative of Villon and Tappecoue.

In his last works, Rabelais's suspense-building is not primarily concerned with the denouement of the text to come, as is the case in both the *Amadis* and the *Aethiopica*, but with the retroactive interpretation of the related events: the episodes of the storm, the calm, the frozen words, Messire Gaster, etc. are all commented upon *après coup*. Even the denouement of the *Cinquiesme Livre*, the posthumous continuation of the Rabelaisian novel, points backwards to the *Tiers Livre*: when, at the end of his long quest for the Dive Bouteille, Panurge finally receives the oracle's message: 'soyez vous mesme interpretes de vostre entreprinse', Pantagruel reminds him he once said the same thing to him, two books before: 'Possible n'est mieux dire, que fait ceste venerable pontife: autant vous en di-je lors que premierement m'en parlastes', i.e. in chapter 29 of the *Tiers Livre*.⁶⁸

⁶⁷ Schwartz J., Irony and Ideology in Rabelais: Structures of Subversion (Cambridge: 1990) 180.

⁶⁸ Rabelais, Œuvres complètes 444.

Conclusion

Rabelais's literary career seems to have been influenced by the successive literary fashions of his day: the popularity of the chivalric prose novels of the thirties, succeeded by the success of *Amadis* in the forties, and the literary debates around *Amadis* from 1545 onward, launched by Amyot's translation of the *Aethiopica*. Therefore, medievalism in Rabelais's work should not be seen as a parody of fossilised relics of a past period, nor is it a romantic return to a lost culture. Instead, it is a direct adaptation of, and a reaction to a rapidly changing literary field.

I would like to finish with an unexpected twist – in fact another intertextual ricochet – in the evolution of the *Amadis* novels. While Rabelais seems to distance himself from the Amadis vogue, the later books translated by Des Essarts's successor Jacques Gohory seem to be influenced by Rabelais. In fact, in order to defend Amadis against critics since Amyot, Gohory proposes an esoteric, steganographic reading of Amadis, inspired by Colonna's Hypnerotomachia Poliphili, and using (seriously) the same terminology as Rabelais did, while praising (mockingly) the 'occult properties' of his first two books. 69 And his last books, the Quart Livre, and more specifically, the posthumous Cinquiesme Livre, display a growing interest in esoterism and alchemy, nourished by the reading of Plutarch's treatises on Greek oracles and on Isis and Osiris, and more specifically of the Hypnerotomachia Poliphili. It is in this use of esoteric material and alchemy that Amadis and the Rabelaisian novel seem to converge, although critics nowadays disagree on the degree of seriousness in Rabelais's use of it.70

In conclusion, it appears that the evolution of Rabelais's books should not solely be explained within the vacuum of a work-immanent analysis, or by an exclusively biographical or historical perspective, but also in a broader perspective of his positioning in a changing literary field, by which he is influenced, and which he himself also influenced.

⁶⁹ See the references given by Gorris R., "Pour une lecture stéganographique des *Amadis* de Jacques Gohory", in *Les Amadis en France au XVI^e siècle* (Paris: 2000) 152, note 68.

⁷⁰ See Maillard J.-F., "Echos ésotériques dans le Cinquiesme Livre?", Etudes Rabelaisiennes 40 (2001) 215–226.

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THE PORTRAIT OF LADY KATHERINE GREY AND HER SON: ICONOGRAPHIC MEDIEVALISM AS A LEGITIMATION STRATEGY*

Martin Spies

The Belvoir Miniature of Lady Katherine Grey

Whenever an allegedly authentic portrait of the Nine Days' Queen Lady Jane Grey (1537–1554) is discovered, it is sure to cause a minor media sensation in the Anglo-American world. Unlike the likenesses of her sister Jane, however, the portraits of Lady Katherine Grey (c. 1540–1568)² have never, up to now, triggered a scholarly debate or excited the public's interest. This is surprising, at least when considering the complex iconography of the singular mother and child miniature, which is now in the Duke of Rutland's collection at Belvoir Castle [Fig. 1]: it shows Lady Katherine wearing a portrait miniature of her husband as a pendant and carrying her son on her left arm while offering him a tiny apple. This portrait is not only the earliest case depicting a sitter wearing a miniature as a piece of jewellery; tis

^{*} The original paper was also presented at the Muzeum Narodowe w Kielcach (Polish National Museum, Kielce) on 21 November 2008.

¹ See for example Higgins Ch., "A Rare Portrait of Lady Jane Grey? Or just an 'Appallingly Bad Picture'?", *The Guardian* (11 November 2006) 13.

² Lady Katherine Grey was the daughter of Henry Grey, Marquess of Dorset and later Duke of Suffolk, and Frances Brandon, a niece of King Henry VIII. To simplify matters Lady Katherine Grey will be referred to by her maiden name throughout this paper. For accounts of her life, see Davey R., The Sisters of Lady Jane Grey and their Wicked Grandfather (London: 1911), Chapman H.W., Two Tudor Portraits: Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey and Lady Katherine Grey (London: 1960), and De Lisle L., The Sisters who would be Queen. The Tragedy of Mary, Katherine and Lady Jane Grey (London: 2008). The authenticity of the two portraits reproduced in Davey and Chapman is dubious. Cf. also Doran S., "Seymour [Grey], Katherine, Countess of Hertford" (http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/25157, accessed 7 October 2008).

³ Rutland collection, Belvoir Castle (inv. no. 'Miniatures 59'). Cf. Auerbach E., Nicholas Hilliard (London: 1961) 55, 288, Murdoch J. – Murrell J. – Noon P.J. – Strong R., The English Miniature (New Haven–London: 1981) 76, Strong R. – Murrell V.J., Artists of the Tudor Court: The Portrait Miniature Rediscovered, 1520–1620 (London: 1983) 53, Coombs K., The Portrait Miniature in England (London: 1998) 26.

⁴ Scarisbrick D., *Tudor and Jacobean Jewellery* (London: 1995) 84–85, cf. also the miniature in the portrait called Lady Walsingham (1572) in Strong R., *The English*

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Fig. 1. [Col. Pl. I (left)] Attributed to Levina Teerlinc, Portrait Miniature of Lady Katherine Grey and her son, c. 1562/63. Vellum on card?, 5.10 cm circular. © Belvoir Castle, Leicestershire, UK / The Bridgeman Art Library.

also the earliest autonomous portrait of a mother and her child in English painting outside the realm of religious art (i.e. donor portraits).

Nowadays this miniature (as well as an earlier one showing Lady Katherine in her late teens [Fig. 11a])⁵ is usually attributed to Levina

Icon: Elizabethan & Jacobean Portraiture, Studies in British Art (London-New Haven: 1969) 171.

⁵ Victoria and Albert Museum, London (inv. no. P.10–1979). The museum also owns a much touched up copy of this miniature (inv. no. P.21–1954), which is wrongly

Teerlinc, née Bening, from Ghent, who came to England in the mid-1540s. This attribution is mainly based on Lady Katherine's awkward 'gothic' angularity, her much too slender, stick-like arms and her narrow torso, which clearly position her in the painterly tradition of the Ghent-Bruges School of Illuminators, of which Levina's father, Simon Bening, was one of the main representatives in the first half of the sixteenth century.⁶

When compared to other works by Teerlinc or to the panel portraits painted by her fellow expatriates William Scrots, Hans Eworth or Steven van der Meulen in the 1550s and 60s.7 the Belvoir Miniature appears at a first glance to be decidedly archaic for its date of creation of 1562/63. Furthermore, the straightforward rigidity of the sitters as well as their stiff and affected display of tenderness seems to be out of place when considering that Teerlinc (or whichever Flemish artist painted the miniature) would presumably have been familiar with works in the line of Maerten van Heemskerck's group portrait of the family of Pieter Jan Foppesz of 1530 [Fig. 2]. Although Pieter's wife Alijdt carries her baby in much the same way as Katherine holds her infant son, the difference between the two portraits could hardly be greater. Alijdt is presented as a loving and caring mother, whose intimate attachment to her child is reminiscent of contemporary Flemish depictions of the Virgin and Child.8 The portrait of Lady Katherine, on the other hand, apparently breathes of a different period and rather resembles the hieratic enthroned Madonnas of the thirteenth century, although it was painted more than thirty years after van Heemskerck's family piece.

On closer inspection, however, the Belvoir Miniature turns out to be intentionally archaic. The artist was not commissioned to paint a tender memento of Lady Katherine and her first-born child, but an iconic portrait, which unmistakably represents the mother and her son

dated (1549) by a later inscription. Cf. Strong R., *The English Renaissance Miniature* (London: 1984) 58, 200, and Strong – Murrell, *Artists of the Tudor Court* 52–53.

⁶ Strong, *The English Renaissance Miniature* chapt. 4. In recent years Teerlinc's authorship of these miniatures has been questioned on stylistic and chronological grounds, cf. James S.E. – Franco J.S., "Susanna Horenbout, Levina Teerlinc and the Mask of Royalty", *Jaarboek: Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten Antwerpen* (2000) 108. However, the authors are misled by a faulty inscription (cf. footnote 5).

⁷ Strong, The English Ícon.

⁸ Malecki H., Die Familie des Pieter Jan Foppesz. Genese und Bedeutung des Kasseler Familienbildes des Maerten van Heemskerck, Kasseler Hefte für Kunstwissenschaft und Kunstpädagogik 4 (Kassel: 1983) 19–42.

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Fig. 2. Maerten van Heemskerck, Portrait of Pieter Jan Foppesz and his family, c. 1530. Oak, 119 × 140 cm. Staatliche Gemäldegalerie, Kassel.

as legitimate descendants of the Plantagenet and early Tudor kings in the time-honoured iconographic traditions devised for her royal ancestors, while also borrowing from the recently suppressed cult of the Virgin. The miniature is indeed one of the early heralds of what Roy Strong has described as a 'bizarre neo-medievalism', the specifically insular style of Elizabethan portraiture, whose 'chief glory lies in the evolution of an isolated, strange, exotic and anti-naturalistic style which is more akin to the aesthetic of Byzantine art' than to recent artistic developments. John N. King has tried to explain this phenomenon by stressing the continuities between late medieval religious iconographies and Tudor notions of royal portraiture: 'The major paradigms for the iconography of the Tudors [...] were drawn from the imagery of religious orthodoxy that had developed by the late Middle

⁹ Strong, The English Icon 2-3.

Ages [...]'.¹⁰ He argues that '[r]oyal iconography filled the vacuum left by iconoclastic attacks [during the Tudor Reformation] when images of monarchs [...] inherited the veneration that statues of the Virgin and Child, saints' images, and other cult objects had acquired by the late Middle Ages'.¹¹ Although Lady Katherine Grey was no queen, the miniature of herself and her son is the result of a conscious and daring attempt to utilize medieval iconographic traditions as a legitimation strategy campaigning for the validation of her controversial marriage and the recognition of her son as the lawful heir to her place in the line of succession as the senior representative of the House of Suffolk.

Lady Katherine and the Elizabethan Succession Question

When Elizabeth succeeded to the throne in 1558, Lady Katherine was next in line according to the regulations made by her great-uncle King Henry VIII. Elizabeth, who deeply mistrusted her cousin as a potential rival, was furious when she was told of Katherine's pregnancy resulting from her secret marriage to Edward Seymour, Earl of Hertford, in 1560: the couple was immediately arrested and taken to the Tower, where their first son Edward, styled Viscount Beauchamp, was born on 24 September 1561. Within months of his baptism, the Hertfords' marriage was declared void by an ecclesiastical commission. This verdict not only compromised both Katherine and Edward Seymour, it also bastardized their son, who could no longer inherit his mother's place in the line of succession and thus not pose a serious danger to Queen Elizabeth. On the other hand, the verdict was not accepted without argument by the Grey and Seymour families, who had a natural interest in seeing the names of Lady Katherine and her husband cleared from the stain of illegitimacy; and it is in the context of their attempts to validate the marriage that the Belvoir Miniature was most likely commissioned in commemoration of this match, its offspring and its consequences for the line of succession.

When it comes to dating the miniature, a comparison of the toddler to Hans Holbein's half-length portrait of the one-year-old Edward,

¹⁰ King J.N., Tudor Royal Iconography: Literature and Arts in an Age of Religious Crisis (Princeton: 1989) 7.

¹¹ Ibid. 17.

Prince of Wales, of late 1538¹² suggests itself and shows that both boys are more or less of the same age. This means that the original portrait of Lady Katherine and her son was in all probability painted in late 1562 or early 1563, when the question of the boy's legitimacy gathered additional significance in the light of recent alarming events: in October 1562 Elizabeth had fallen ill with a potentially fatal bout of smallpox without having an heir of her own body. Although the queen quickly recovered, the questions of her marriage and of the succession became more urgent and would be widely debated in the forthcoming parliament of 1563. Officially, Lady Katherine was still heiress presumptive to the English throne as the senior representative of the Suffolk line, because Henry VIII had ignored the rule of primogeniture in his last will and debarred the senior Scottish line (the descendants of his elder sister Margaret) in favour of the descendants of his younger sister Mary, the dowager queen of France, and her second husband Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk (Lady Katherine's grandparents).¹³ Although there was by no means a consensus in parliament as to who should be heir apparent for as long as the gueen was childless, the largest (and mostly Protestant) faction, probably headed by the Earl of Arundel, 14 seems to have favoured Lady Katherine, whereas a minor (and mostly Catholic) camp endorsed Mary Stuart's claim, while the queen refused to commit herself to any claimant at all.¹⁵

Matters came to a head when Elizabeth got hold of a copy of John Hales's *A Declaration of the Succession of the Crown Imperial of England* (1563), a manuscript treatise endorsing Lady Katherine's claim on the grounds of King Henry's will and 'the common Lawes of this Realme', which sparked a war of pamphlets on the succession ques-

¹² Foister S., Holbein in England (London: 2006) 100.

¹³ Levine M., The Early Elizabethan Succession Question, 1558–1568 (Stanford: 1966) chapt. 1.

¹⁴ Ibid. 56. Arundel was Katherine's uncle by marriage. The earliest reference to a now lost portrait of Lady Katherine ('Of the Lady Katheryn Graye, married to the Earle of Hertfourd') occurs in the 1590 inventory of the collection of Arundel's son-in-law, John, Lord Lumley, who had probably inherited the larger part of his collection in 1580. Cf. Cust L., "The Lumley Inventories", *The Walpole Society* 6 (1917–1918) 26.

¹⁵ Levine, The Early Elizabethan Succession Question chapt. 4, and Post Walton K., Catholic Queen, Protestant Patriarchy: Mary, Queen of Scots, and the Politics of Gender and Religion (Basingstoke: 2007) chapt. 2.

tion.¹⁶ Hales's pamphlet was the last straw, which ended all hopes for Lady Katherine's reconciliation with the queen, whose patience was finally exhausted: not only had the imprisoned couple committed the folly of conceiving a second son, Thomas (born in February 1563), but their supporters had also meddled in the succession debate, which Elizabeth perceived as a dangerous threat to her own authority, if not to her life. Katherine and her husband were separated and relegated to their respective families on the outbreak of the plague in August 1563. They never saw each other again, but they were reunited in death in Salisbury Cathedral, where a spectacular monument was erected in their memory.¹⁷ This monument also bears witness to the legitimacy of their blood line and thus of the Seymours' place in the succession, which had eventually been confirmed in 1606, when the Hertfords' marriage was declared valid 38 years after Katherine's death.

Copies of the Belvoir Miniature

The Belvoir Miniature, which was for unknown reasons mislabelled as Lady Elizabeth (sic! Her name was Margery) Seymour and her son (the later Protector Somerset, father of Lady Katherine's husband) as late as 1913, is undoubtedly the original portrait. Its provenance before 1903 seems to be unknown, but it is possible that it has been owned by the Manners family since 1750, when the Duke of Somerset's daughter Frances Seymour (a descendant of Lady Katherine Grey) married the Duke of Rutland's son John Manners, styled Marquess of Granby, and could have brought the miniature as part of her

¹⁶ Levine, *The Early Elizabethan Succession Question* chapt. 5, and Post Walton, *Catholic Queen, Protestant Patriarchy* 55–57. I would like to thank Prof. Post Walton for sending me a transcription of Hales's 'Declaration', which has remained unpublished. Nathaniel Boothe erroneously attributed the pamphlet to Sir Anthony Browne when he published a slightly different version in *The Right of Succession to the Crown of England* (London, Printed for William Taylor: 1723) 1–32.

¹⁷ Fletcher J.M.J., *The Hertford, or Somerset Monument in Salisbury Cathedral* (Devizes: 1927), and Llewellyn N., "Horace Walpole and the Post-Reformation Funeral Monument: The Limits of Antiquarianism", *Church Monuments* 19 (2004) 96–114.

¹⁸ Manners V., Catalogue of Miniatures at Belvoir Castle (Grantham: 1903; repr. 1913) 4. For Somerset's parents, see White G.H. (ed.), The Complete Peerage or a History of the House of Lords and All Its Members from the Earliest Times, vol. XII (London: 1953) 59–60.

inheritance from Petworth House.¹⁹ Before it became part of the Rutland collection the miniature had already served as a model for contemporary larger-scale versions, which were in their turn copied until at least the mid nineteenth century. All of them, however, fall short of the miniature's richness of detail and painterly quality. Although it is impossible to establish the sequence of their production with any certainty, since none of the surviving examples has ever undergone either dendrochronological, pigment, x-ray or infra-red analyses, two groups of paintings derived from the miniature can be differentiated – firstly those that can be classified as more or less exact copies, like the small panel painting at Petworth House formerly attributed to Hans Eworth [Fig. 3],²⁰ which even copies the miniature's painted gold border, and secondly those that have undergone a couple of significant changes and are therefore adaptations rather than copies, like the larger panel painting now at Syon House.²¹ In the latter Lady Katherine's tightly fitting slashed sleeves as depicted in the miniature have been replaced by wider gauze sleeves, which only came into fashion in the later 1560s, whereas the costume in the miniature and the Petworth copy is wholly consistent with the style of the earlier 1560s.²² Of greater

¹⁹ For the marriage, see White G.H. (ed.), *The Complete Peerage or a History of the House of Lords and All Its Members from the earliest Times*, vol. XI (London: 1949) 268–269.

²⁰ Egremont collection, Petworth House (inv. no. 251, panel, 30.5 cm square). Cf. Baker C.H.C., Catalogue of the Petworth Collection of Pictures in the Possession of Lord Leconfield (London: 1920) 36, Cust L., "The Painter HE", The Walpole Society 2 (1912–1913) 34, plate XXIXa. Not in Strong R., Hans Eworth: A Tudor Artist and his Circle (Leicester: 1965). A copy on canvas, dating probably from the late eighteenth century, was offered at Christie's in 1965 (wrongly identified as 'Anne, Duchess of Somerset'), cf. Catalogue of Important English Pictures, c. 1550–c. 1880 from the Northwick Park Collection (London: 1965) 19. In or before 1855 Thomas Youngman Gooderson copied the Petworth Portrait for Philip Henry Stanhope (cf. West Sussex Record Office, ref. PHA 1034).

²¹ Northumberland collection, Syon House (inv. no. 04652, panel, 73.7 cm circular). Cf. Doran S. (ed.), *Elizabeth: The Exhibition at the National Maritime Museum* (London: 2003) 64, and Cust L., "The Painter HE" 34. Late seventeenth- or eighteenth-century copies of the same size (81.3 × 71.1 cm) bearing identical inscriptions and probably by the same hand are at Syon House (inv. no. 04372, panel) and Audley End (inv. no. 187, canvas; cf. Squires A., *The Greys: A Long and Noble Line* (Hale: 2002) 58, and Walker R.J.B., *Audley End, Essex: Catalogue of the Pictures in the State Rooms* (London: 1964) 20–21). An eighteenth-century oil miniature on copper was sold at Sotheby's in 1990 (wrongly identified as 'Frances, Duchess of Suffolk', cf. *British Paintings* 1500–1850 (London: 1990) 1).

²² Cf., for example, Eworth's portrait of Margaret Audley, Duchess of Norfolk (1562) and the Master of the Countess of Warwick's portrait of Mary Hill, Mrs Mackwilliam (1567) in Strong, *The English Icon* 95, 108.



Fig. 3. Henry Meyer, The Petworth Portrait of Lady Katherine Grey and her son (erroneously inscribed "Anne Stanhope, Second Wife of Edward Lord Protector Somerset, with her infant Son"), before 1837. Steel engraving, 14 × 14 cm (portrait only). Private collection.

importance than changes to Lady Katherine's costume, though, is the total eradication of any overt signs alluding to her husband in the Syon House portrait: the Earl of Hertford's miniature has been replaced (or hidden) by a closed locket and all rings which might hint at her married state have been omitted (or obliterated). The reasons for this are obscure since there are no contemporary documents referring to the portrait.

Although neither portrait can boast a provenance reaching back until the late sixteenth century, it is nevertheless reasonable to assume that both the Petworth and the Syon House portraits have always been in the possession of the descendants of Lady Katherine and thus might have been commissioned within her lifetime or shortly after her death in 1568 as memorial portraits. The provenance of the Petworth portrait (which is wrongly inscribed as 'Anne Stanhope. Duchess of Somerset') can so far only be tentatively retraced until 1725, when the antiquary and engraver George Vertue noted 'at Petworth the Duke of Somersetts house [...] a little old picture of Anne Stanhope Dutches of Sommersett wife to Ed. Du Sommersett'. 23 The portrait at Syon House is in all likelihood identical with the one bequeathed in 1673 by the widow of Lady Katherine's grandson (i.e. William Seymour, first Duke of Somerset), Frances: 'Also I give to my Grandaughter the Lady Frances Thynne [...] my Lady Katherines picture with my Lords Father in her Armes when he was little'. 24 According to Vertue, the portrait was to remain in the possession of the 'descendants of the Family' and was thus in the hands of Frances Thynne's great-grandson Francis Greville, Baron Brooke of Beauchamps Court, by 1742,25 who in his turn gave it to his distant cousin Elizabeth Percy, née Seymour, the first Duchess of Northumberland, 26 who finally brought the portrait to Syon House, where it remains to this day.

The Belvoir Miniature and Late Medieval Royal Iconographies

A ready starting point for the analysis of the iconographic traditions which have influenced the Belvoir Miniature's formal structure can be provided by the comparison with the near contemporary Coronation Portrait of Queen Elizabeth I [Fig. 4], which, however, only survives in two later copies.²⁷ Both Katherine and Elizabeth are depicted in hieratic frontality, and their faces are framed by high, multi-layered ruffs, which stress their iconic status. While Elizabeth's rank is unmistakably indicated by the regalia, Lady Katherine's hierarchical position is at first less obvious. Yet their statuesque poses reveal both of

²³ Vertue G., "Notebooks II", The Walpole Society 20 (1931–1932) 81.

²⁴ Will of Frances, Duchess of Somerset (PKO, The National Archives, cat.: Prob/11/355, fol. 6).

²⁵ Vertue G., "Notebooks V", The Walpole Society 26 (1937–1938) 50.

²⁶ Lewis W.S. (ed.), The Yale Edition of Horace Walpole's Correspondence, vol. XXXV (New Haven: 1973) 411.

²⁷ Arnold J., "The 'Coronation' Portrait of Queen Elizabeth I", *The Burlington Magazine* 120 (1978) 727–741, Doran, *Elizabeth* 42–43.



Fig. 4. [Col. Pl. II] Unknown Artist, Portrait of Elizabeth I in her Coronation Robes, c. 1600. Oak, 127.3×99.7 cm. © National Portrait Gallery, London.

them as legitimate descendants of the Plantagenet kings by consciously referring to the traditional portrait formula devised for their ancestors in the high and late Middle Ages, which is probably best known from the late fourteenth-century larger-than-life Westminster Portrait of Richard II [Fig. 5], representing the enthroned figure of the king in strict hieratic frontality in the style of the iconography of Christ in Majesty. Invested with the crown, the orb and the sceptre, Richard's portrait is not only the depiction of an individual king but also an icon of kingship as such.²⁸ By inference, the same applies to other late medieval and early modern portraits of kings and queens along this formula (e.g. on seals, illuminated documents, stained glass, panel paintings and miniatures),²⁹ including the Coronation Portrait and, to a lesser extent, also the Belvoir Miniature of Lady Katherine, who, of course, was no queen but is shown as the mother of the pretended heir to the throne.

Notwithstanding the apparent similarities between the Coronation Portrait and the Westminster Portrait of Richard II, it is important to stress the modifications to the traditional (male) portrait formula necessitated by Elizabeth's sex and status as an unmarried woman. Therefore I would like to suggest that the Coronation Portrait combines the iconographies of the king in the style of Christ in Majesty and of the late medieval queen consort as Queen of Heaven. Elizabeth wears her hair uncovered and flowing over her shoulders 'in the style of an intact virgin' because '[m]aidenly chastity was a necessary attribute of [Elizabeth's] claim to be a legitimate and marriageable queen', 30 whereas a king's virginity up to his marriage was of no particular importance. As J.L. Laynesmith has shown, the cult of the Virgin Mary strongly influenced the ideology of queenship from at least the twelfth century onwards. Queens began to adopt Marian attributes and fashioned themselves into secular versions of the Virgin in their roles as mother to the future monarch and intercessor with their

²⁸ Alexander J., "The Portrait of Richard II in Westminster Abbey", in Gordon D. – Monnas L. – Elam C. (eds.), *The Regal Image of Richard II and the Wilton Diptych* (London: 1997) 197–206.

²⁹ Auerbach E., Tudor Artists: A Study of Painters in the Royal Service and of Portraiture on Illuminated Documents from the Accession of Henry VIII to the Death of Elizabeth I (London: 1954).

³⁰ King J.N., "Queen Elizabeth I: Representations of the Virgin Queen", *The Renaissance Quarterly* 43 (1990) 41, 43.



Fig. 5. Unknown Artist, King Richard II, late 14th c. Oak, 213.5 \times 110 cm. Westminster Abbey, London © Dean and Chapter of Westminster.

husband, the king.³¹ Like other late medieval queens, the wife of Edward IV, Elizabeth Woodville (1437–1492), was frequently compared to the Virgin. Although she was already a widowed mother of two sons when she married the king in 1464, she was nevertheless represented as the Virgin in a tableau of the Holy Family on the occasion of her London entry prior to her coronation in 1465.32 In the early 1470s, when Elizabeth Woodville had given birth to at least half a dozen children, she was still depicted as the virgin Queen of Heaven with open hair in the book of the 'Fraternity of Our Lady's Assumption' [Fig. 6], which she had recently joined. While the portrait formula is similar to the one used in the Westminster and Coronation Portraits, the figure of Elizabeth Woodville nevertheless lacks the monumental character of Richard II and Elizabeth I, whose portraits are icons of monarchical power displaying nothing but the figure of the sovereign and the symbols of rule (throne and insignia). Instead, Elizabeth Woodville stands amidst a millefleurs decoration of roses and gillyflowers, which are commonly associated with the Virgin's motherhood and which therefore stress Elizabeth's role as gueen consort and mother of the infant Prince of Wales.³³ This example shows that factual virginity was neither required nor desireable in a queen consort in order to be portrayed as Queen of Heaven.

The apparent incompatibility of virginity and motherhood is of different relevance in the Coronation Portrait, since Elizabeth I actually was a virgin at the time of her coronation and supposedly remained so for the rest of her life. Whereas the beholders of Elizabeth Woodville as Queen of Heaven had to 'imagine' the queen's virginity, the contemplators of the Coronation Portrait would have to 'imagine' Elizabeth's offspring in order to make the legitimizing association with the Virgin and Christ's immaculate birth work. Although as a Protestant queen, Elizabeth could have no ostensible motivation for associating herself with the cult of the Virgin like her great-grandmother Elizabeth Woodville, she nevertheless filled 'the vacuum left by the [...]

³¹ Laynesmith J.L., *The Last Medieval Queens: English Queenship, 1445–1503* (Oxford: 2005) 24–32.

³² Ibid. 33, 87–88.

³³ The 'Book of the Fraternity of Our Lady's Assumption' belongs to The Worshipful Company of Skinners and is on loan to the Guildhall Library, London (Ms 31692). I would like to acknowledge the City of London Corporation for their kind help. Cf. also Laynesmith, *The Last Medieval Queens* 33, and Marks R. – Williamson P. (eds.), *Gothic: Art for England* 1400–1547 (London: 2003) 271.



Fig. 6. Unknown Artist, *Illumination of Queen Elizabeth Woodville in the "Book of the Fraternity of Our Lady's Assumption"*, c. 1470/75. Vellum, 41 × 28.5 cm (whole leaf). The Worshipful Company of Skinners, on loan to the Guildhall Library, London (Ms 31692).

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Virgin and Child'³⁴ and fashioned herself into the virgin mother of her subjects. Thus Elizabeth chose to legitimize her rule in the Coronation Portrait by combining the monumental portrait formula of Richard II's Westminster Portrait with the celebration of the Virgin as Queen of Heaven following the model established for the queen consorts. Later images based on the Coronation Portrait (e.g. the title page of *The Bishop's Bible*, 1569),³⁵ though, mostly depict her with partly covered or trussed hair, which obviously symbolizes her metaphorical marriage to her subjects rather than her legendary virginity.

Lady Katherine, on the other hand, is explicitly *neither* represented as an unmarried virgin like Elizabeth I, *nor* as the Queen of Heaven like Elizabeth Woodville, but as a wife and mother – a white cap covers most of the sitter's hair, and her husband's miniature as well her rings refer to her married state. Rather than referring to the iconography of the Queen of Heaven, the miniature's portrait formula invokes depictions of the Virgin and Child, in which Christ receives an apple or an orb as the symbol of power and the salvation from sin from his mother.³⁶ In the miniature Katherine bears the apple in her left hand in a similar way as Richard II bears the orb, whereas the manner in which her son touches the apple is all but identical to the way in which Elizabeth holds the orb in the Coronation Portrait. It seems as if Lady Katherine, by offering rather than clutching the apple, resigns her claim to the throne in favour of her son, who is consequently represented as Queen Elizabeth's heir apparent.

While the stylistic impact of medieval English depictions of the Virgin and Child can hardly be gauged due to the scarcity of surviving examples,³⁷ the miniature's formal correspondence to a group of hieratic Madonnas produced in the Rhine-Meuse region in the thirteenth century is conspicuous. A sculpture like the 'Mother of God with the rock crystal' (c. 1220–1230) [Fig. 7] could have inspired the awkward way in which Katherine carries her son.³⁸ The position of Katherine's left arm as shown in the miniature is anatomically impossible, but the

³⁴ See note 11.

³⁵ Doran, Elizabeth 29.

³⁶ Cf. "Apfel", in Kirschbaum E. (ed.), Lexikon der Christlichen Ikonographie, vol. I (Rome – Freiburg – Basel – Vienna: 1968) 123–124, and also in Sachs H. – Badstüber E. – Neumann H., Christliche Ikonographie in Stichworten (Darmstadt: 1998) 40.

³⁷ Cheetham F.W., Alabaster Images of Medieval England (Woodbridge: 2003) 71–106.
38 Schnützen Museum, Cologne (inv. no. A 14) Cf. Bergmann II. Die Halzskulhtu-

³⁸ Schnütgen Museum, Cologne (inv. no. A 14). Cf. Bergmann U., *Die Holzskulpturen des Mittelalters (1000–1400), Schnütgen Museum* (Cologne: 1989) 153–157.



Fig. 7. Unknown Cologne Master, *Mother of God with the rock crystal*, c. 1220–1230. Oak and walnut, 57.6 × 28 × 23.5 cm. Schnütgen Museum, Cologne © Rheinisches Bildarchiv Köln.

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artist obviously wanted to show her carrying her son with the same arm to which the hand belongs that bears the apple. Depictions of the Virgin and Child displaying this idiosyncratic pose are scarce, and although Sandro Botticelli adapted a somewhat similar attitude for his Madonnas 'del Magnificat' (c. 1481) [Fig. 8] and 'della Melagrana' (c. 1487), these early Renaissance paintings bear little resemblance to the strictly hieratic image of Lady Katherine in other respects.³⁹



Fig. 8. Sandro Botticelli, *Madonna del Magnificat*, c. 1481. Panel, 118 cm circular. Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence.

³⁹ Both are in the Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence (inv. nos. 1609 and 1607). Cf. Caneva C., *Botticelli. Catalogo completo dei dipinti* (Florence: 1990) 66–67, 95.

Genealogical Trees

Another possible (though admittedly hypothetical) layer of significance may be revealed by considering the Belvoir Miniature in the context of small-scale portraits on royal family trees following the iconography of late medieval and early modern depictions of the Tree of Jesse and the Family Tree of the Virgin. The former traces the lineage of Christ through the ancestors of his 'earthly father' Joseph back to Jesse, the progenitor of the kings of Judah, whereas the latter shows Mary's (and Christ's) descent through her parents St. Anne and St. Joachim (who was also thought to be a descendant of Jesse). The concept of Jesse's Tree originates in Isaiah's messianic prophecy 'There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots [...]' (11.1-3), which is interpreted as referring to the birth of Christ by the evangelists Matthew (1.1–17) and Luke (3.23–38), who also delineate a family tree. The Mother of Christ has a key position in the concept of Jesse's Tree, which was further stressed by St. Jerome's fifth-century Latin translation of the Bible, where he employs the word 'virga' for 'branch' and adds the near-pun 'virga est virgo', meaning 'the branch is the virgin', which led to the development of the Tree of the Virgin. Depictions of Jesse's Tree usually show a root or 'branch' issuing from the reclining figure of Jesse (the 'stump'), which culminates in the image of the Virgin sitting in a blossom or the crown of the tree and holding the infant Christ, whose ancestors, the kings of Judah listed by Matthew and Luke, repose on the lower boughs (or blossoms).40

The exact time and origin of the association of the Tree of Jesse with the royal family tree and the queen's task to secure the continuance of the dynasty by giving birth to a son are lost, but it was obviously firmly established by the mid thirteenth century, when Henry III ordered a Tree of Jesse to be painted for his wife Eleanor of Provence.⁴¹ The quasi-divine status of the king (and by implication also of the

⁴⁰ Kirschbaum E. (ed.), *Lexikon der Christlichen Ikonographie*, vol. IV (Rome – Freiburg – Basel – Vienna: 1972) 549–558, Os H. van – Filedt Kok J.P. – Luijten G. – Scholten F., *Netherlandish Art in the Rijksmuseum 1400–1600* (Amsterdam: 2000) 72–73, Lindgren-Fridell M., "Der Stammbaum Mariä aus Anna und Joachim. Ikonographische Studie eines Formbestandes des Spätmittelalters", *Marburger Jahrbuch für Kunstwissenschaft* 11/12 (1938–1939) 289–308, Schiller G., *Ikonographie der christlichen Kunst*, vol. IV, 2 (Gütersloh: 1980) 160–163.

⁴¹ Laynesmith, The Last Medieval Queens 141.

queen and the heir to the throne) was propagated to a greater public on the occasion of Henry VI's London entry in 1432, when a depiction of the king's ancestry was juxtaposed to the Tree of Jesse. 42 The association was also taken up in one of the pageants staged in 1456 at the arrival of Henry's wife Margaret of Anjou and their three-year-old son in Coventry: after an actor impersonating Isaiah had prophecied that 'Like as mankynde was gladdid by the birght [birth] of Ihesus, So shall this empyre iov the birthe of your bodye [i.e. the queen's son]', another actor in the guise of Jeremiah directly compared the queen to the Virgin, who, according to St. Jerome, was thought to be identical with the 'branch': 'Vn-to the rote [rod, i.e. the branch] of Jesse rote [root, i.e. the Tree of Jesse] likken you well I may'. 43 Although depictions of the Tree of Jesse and the Tree of the Virgin became scarce after the Reformation, their desanctified iconography lived on in representations of the Tudor family tree.44 The earliest example is perhaps the striking woodcut embellishing the title page of Edward Hall's The Vnion of the two noble and illustre famelies of Lancastre & Yorke (2nd ed., 1550) [Fig. 9], which is in fact closer to the Tree of the Virgin than to the Tree of Jesse, since it traces the decent of King Henry VIII, 'the indubitate flower and very heire of both the saied lineages', not only through the house of Lancaster represented by his father, but also through the house of York represented by his mother. 45 Henry, the 'indubitate flower', has taken over the Virgin's traditional place and his half-length figure (which again recalls the hieratic portrait formula discussed above) arises from a Tudor Rose, which unites the patrilineal and matrilineal branches. Surrounded by the petals of the rose blossom, which give the image an almost circular outline, the formal aspects of Henry's portrait resemble those of the miniature of Lady Katherine and her son.

The Belvoir Miniature bears an even greater generic resemblance to the original Virgin and Child iconography in the Trees of Jesse and the Virgin, as a comparison with an early sixteenth-century example of a Tree of the Virgin by an unknown Netherlands artist [Fig. 10] shows: both Lady Katherine and the Virgin are rendered in half-length

⁴² Ibid. 30.

⁴³ Ibid. 140-141.

⁴⁴ King, Tudor Royal Iconography 200.

⁴⁵ Title page. The branches arise from the reclining figures of the sons of King Edward III, John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, and Edmund, Duke of York.

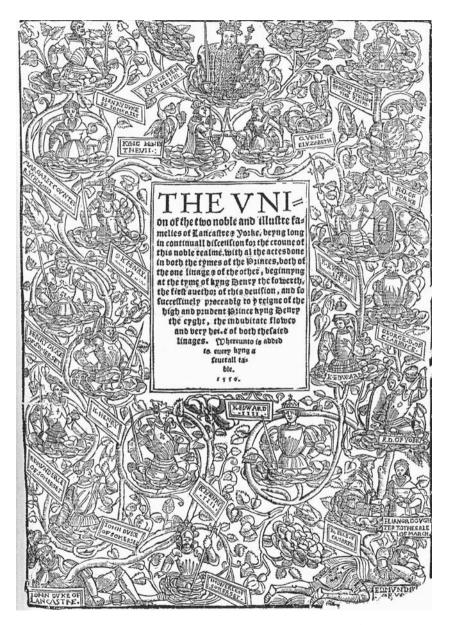


Fig. 9. Title page (woodcut, 25×17.5 cm) of Edward Hall's *The Vnion of the two noble and illustre famelies of Lancastre & Yorke*, 2nd edition (London: Richard Grafton, 1550).

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Fig. 10. Unknown Netherlands Artist, *The Parents of Mary*, c. 1520. Oak, 46×35 cm. Staatliche Museen zu Berlin – Gemäldegalerie (cat. 2131), photo Jörg P. Anders.

and carry the full-length figures of their children. What is more, the circular shape of the miniature seems to parallel the aureole surrounding the Virgin and Child. The iconographically important symbols of the rose or blossom, from which the Virgin and Child and the figure of Henry VIII arise, are, however, absent from the Belvoir Miniature. But maybe this has not always been the case: would it be too farfetched to assume that the Belvoir Miniature, which is now displayed in a plain gold (or brass?) pendant, was originally protected by a costly turned ivory case in the shape of a Tudor Rose similar to the one holding the miniature of the teenaged Lady Katherine [Fig. 11b]?⁴⁶ In this case, Lady Katherine's portrait could be imagined as replacing the king's likeness in an updated royal family tree. Thus, it would not only be in line with Henry's regulations for the succession in the case of Elizabeth dying without an heir of her body, but it would also be a return to the original iconography by again replacing the burly figure of the king with an image of the mother and her child.

Conclusion

The Belvoir Miniature unmistakably propagates the validity of the Hertfords' marriage and rejects the bastardization of their son Edward. It presents Lady Katherine as 'the indubitate flower and heire' to the English throne, who intends to leave her claim to her eldest son according to the will of Henry VIII, by invoking and adapting long established iconographical legitimation strategies, which would have been recognized by the portrait's contemporary beholders. The miniature not only follows the example of Queen Elizabeth's slightly earlier Coronation Portrait by citing the monumental formula developed in medieval ruler portraits, it also alludes to the pre-Reformation iconography of the Virgin and Child, which had already been employed by the medieval queen consorts. It is all the more apt in Lady Katherine's case where the claim to power is transmitted through the mother rather than through the child's 'earthly father', the Earl of Hertford, who had no place in the line of succession, but whose status as lawful

⁴⁶ Holbein's miniature of Anne of Cleves (Victoria and Albert Museum, London) is also encased in an ivory box decorated with the Tudor Rose, cf. Strong, *The English Renaissance Miniature* 47.





Fig. 11a. [Col. Pl. I (right)] / 11b. Levina Teerlinc (?) and Unknown Ivory Turner, Portrait Miniature of Lady Katherine Grey and its original turned ivory case, 1555–1560. Vellum on card, ivory, 3.3 cm circular (miniature only). Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Fig. 11b

Fig. 11a

husband and father is nevertheless indicated by his own portrait worn close to Katherine's heart.

Notwithstanding its painterly quality, it is to be hoped that the complex iconography of the Belvoir Miniature (and its copies) will be recognized as one of the major achievements in the field of early Elizabethan portraiture.

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MEDIEVAL TRADITION PRESENTED IN EARLY MODERN PAINTINGS AND INSCRIPTIONS IN LITTLE POLAND

Waldemar Kowalski

Introduction

Epigraphs, and particularly epitaphs, were one of the most widely used forms of communication in Old Polish societies. Such texts record not only events important to the family, but also those important to the local community — whether that be the parish, county or village, or the monastic order or chapter. Events from the distant past that were recalled, interpreted and presented in the form of epigraphs and murals in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries reflect a wide appreciation of medieval chronicles and documents. Artistically transformed early modern visions of the medieval past publicized in epigraphs and paintings formed the basis of both local and national ties, especially after the devastating mid-seventeenth-century wars.

Formal inscriptions of a historical nature can be distinguished into two distinct groups. The first is composed of titles accompanying murals, most importantly those within monastery churches. Such inscriptions clarify the exhibited artwork, thereby playing an important role, albeit secondary to the artwork. The second group is composed of inscriptions on plaques and tiles which identify the founders of sacred objects. In such cases, the text is crucial, as it is often the only form of relaying such information. This study primarily discusses outstanding epigraphic and iconographic ties to the distant past in monastery and parish churches in the central and northern regions of Little Poland, and how such presentations may have responded to the needs of early modern audiences.

¹ For a critical review of these sources, see Kowalski W., 'Do zmartwywstania swego za pewnym wodzem Kristusem...'. Staropolskie inskrypcje północno-zachodniej Małopolski. '... To One's Resurrection, Following Christ, the Steadfast Master...' The Medieval and Early Modern Inscriptions of North-western Little Poland (Kielce: 2004).

² Sparrow J., Visible Words: A Study of Inscriptions in and as Books and Works of Art (London: 1969) 48, 58 and passim.

The territorial range of this study illustrates the advance in editions of source material on which this presentation is above all based. The primary source for the research results presented here is the published series *Corpus Inscriptionum Poloniæ*, which includes a collection of inscriptions dating from before 1800.³ However, the published documentation on the topic of church iconography that can be employed here is limited to only basic descriptions.⁴ Up until this time, only the Cistercian monasteries and churches have been analyzed in light of the ideologies depicted in paintings on walls and canvases.⁵ Despite the limits mentioned here, the material available allows us to identify the inspiration for historical interests as well as the significance of their artistic and epigraphic representations in Little Poland from the sixteenth through to the eighteenth century.

Monastic Churches and Houses

In abbeys belonging to Benedictine and Cistercian monks, whose traditions are unique in their far-reaching public register, series of

³ Corpus Inscriptionum Poloniæ (hereafter CIP), vol. I, Szymański J. (editor in chief), Pallatinatus Kielcensis, Trelińska B. (ed.), 1 Civitas Kielce et districtus Kielcensis (hereafter I, 1 Kielce) (Kielce: 1975); CIP, vol. I, Trelińska B. (ed.), 2 Andreovia et districtus Andreoviensis (hereafter I, 2 Andreovia) (Kielce: 1978); CIP, vol. I, Zgorzelska U. (ed.), 3 Busko-Zdrój et districtus Buscensis (hereafter I, 3 Busko) (Kielce: 1980); CIP, vol. I, Trelińska B. (ed.), 4 Miechovia et Pińczów districtusque (hereafter I, 4 Miechovia) (Kielce: 1983); CIP, vol. I, Janik M. (ed.), 5 Włoszczowa, Końskie et Ostrowiec Sanctocrucensis districtusque (hereafter I, 5 Włoszczowa) (Kielce: 1986); CIP, vol. VII, Guldon Z. (editor in chief), Palatinatus Radomiensis, Kowalski W. (ed.), 1 Radom et Ilża regioque (hereafter VII, 1 Radom) (Warsaw: 1992); CIP, vol. VII, Wójcik A. (ed.), 2 Grójec, Kozienice et Lipsko regioque (hereafter VII, 2 Grójec) (Kielce: 1980; unpublished MA thesis, manuscript in the Archive of Jan Kochanowski University at Kielce, Poland).

⁴ Katalog Zabytków Szluki w Polsce, Łoziński J.Z. – Wolff B. (editors in chief), vol. III, Województwo kieleckie, Kutrzebianka K. (ed.), 1 Powiat buski (Warsaw: 1957); Katalog Zabytków Sztuki w Polsce, vol. III, Puciata O. – Świechowski Z. (eds.), 2 Powiat idżecki (Warsaw: 1957); Katalog Zabytków Sztuki w Polsce, vol. III, Przypkowski T. (ed.), 3 Powiat jędrzejowski (Warsaw: 1957); Katalog Zabytków Sztuki w Polsce, vol. III, Przypkowski T. in cooperation with Brykowski R. – Miks N. – Miłobędzki A. (ed.), 4 Powiat kielecki (Warsaw: 1957); Katalog Zabytków Sztuki w Polsce, vol. III, Kwiczala M. – Szczepkowska K. (eds.), 6 Powiat kozienicki (Warsaw: 1958).

⁵ Kaczmarek R. – Witkowski J., "Historia i tradycja średniowieczna w sztuce cystersów Europy środkowowschodniej (XVII–XVIII w.)" in Strzelczyk J. (ed.), Cystersi w kulturze średniowiecznej Europy (Poznań: 1992) 387–413; Rotter L., "Treści i symbolika polichromii w kościele Cystersów w Jędrzejowie (zarys problematyki)", Folia Historica Cracoviensia 10 (2004) 327–334.

paintings reveal both of their traditions, presenting the founding and development not only of the order as a whole but also of each respective abbey.

Tyniec at Cracow

According to tradition, the foundation of this Benedictine abbey dates back to 1044, when monks from Cluny are said to have settled there. Early modern awareness of the Benedictine tradition appears in a number of presentations in the monastery church. Stories about the work of the order, illustrated on the choir stalls between 1618 and 1622, open with scenes from the life of St. Benedict as they were depicted by Gregory the Great in Dialogues.⁶ The scenes illustrate the miracles performed by the saint and draw attention to the power of his faith. The last in the chronology of such wonders, closing the cycle on the stalls, is a picture of the victory of Christian soldiers (perhaps Polish) over Islam armies (Turkish or Tatar). It is difficult to connect the victory, which was to have occurred thanks to the intercession of the head of the order, with a specific battle. The years during which the stalls were renovated were a time of continuous fighting along the southeastern borders of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. On 6 October 1620, the Polish army was utterly crushed by the combined strength of the Turkish-Tatar armies in Moldavia, outside the village Cecora (Tutora). A year later, after a lengthy siege of the Khotyn fortress in Moldavia on the river Dniester by a Polish company, the Turks drew back and signed a peace treaty. King Ladislaus IV Vasa, a nominal leader of the Polish army, gained renown throughout Europe as protector of the bulwark of Christianity. At the Benedictine monastery in Melk, Austria, a similar picture attributes victory over the infidels to the intercession of Coloman. Because Tyniec maintained contact with Melk, one may assume that the pattern was taken from there.

The next scenes in the stalls retell the era of Christian expansion in Europe. We see Pope Gregory the Great, who in 597 sent monks to evangelize the British Isles. In the scenes that follow, St. Pirmin, the Alamanni's apostle, who founded the Reichenau Abbey (724), is

⁶ All the information concerning the murals at the abbey after Sczaniecki P., Opactwo tynieckie (Cracow: 2003).

depicted. In the next picture, one of the abbots from Cluny is shown accepting the statutes from the hands of St. Benedict and St. Martin. This scene is meaningful in the context of traditions held in Tyniec regarding the Cluny roots of that cloister.⁷ The only Polish accent in the painting depicting the expanse of Christianity is a scene showing five brothers, monks from Międzyrzecz. They were two Benedictines, two novices and their servant, who appear to be accompanied by St. Barnaba. This first company of Benedictine hermits on Polish land was underhandedly murdered between the 10th and 11th of November 1003.⁸ In the background St. Andrzej Świerad is depicted with his student, Benedict. They both lived as hermits in the forests near Nitra in the region bordering Slovakia.

The theme is continued in the murals with which artist Andrzej Radwański decorated the 1741 St. Benedict Chapel. He focuses on the victory of St. Benedict and those who were brought to fame by the Benedictine order and through their connection with the monastery. Popes and kings are depicted, and among them stands the assumed founder and benefactor of the abbey, Casimir Charles the Restorer of the Piast dynasty (1016–1058)⁹ with monks and nuns. The abovementioned prince is depicted with a document, on which is written '100 villæ Tinecio', which was to provide information about the generosity of the benefactor. Scenes from the life of Casimir the Restorer were also depicted in early modern murals in the corridors, but those have not survived to the present.

The mural on the western wall of that chapel is interpreted as a portrayal of the death of King Boleslaus the Generous, also referred to as Boleslaus the Bold (born 1041?–†1082), son of Casimir Charles the Restorer. It is hypothesized that this king was buried in the Tyniec monastery, of which he is said to have been the founder. According to the tradition of the abbey, Judith Sophia of Swabia, of the Salian dynasty (†1105 postquam), wife of Ladislaus I Herman, younger brother

⁷ Kanior M., Polska kongregacja benedyktyńska Świętego Krzyża 1709–1864 (Tyniec: 2000) 38.

⁸ For more on this, see Kürbis B., "Purpurae passionis aureus finis. Brun z Kwerfurtu i pięciu braci eremitów", in her, *Na progach historii*, vol. II, *O świadectwach do dziejów kultury Polski średniowiecznej* (Poznań: 2001) 163–180.

⁹ For his biography, see Jasiński K., Rodowód pierwszych Piastów (Warsaw – Wrocław: 1993) 128–143.

¹⁰ Jasiński, Rodowód 155; Szczaniecki, Opactwo 56, 94.

of Boleslaus, was its co-founder. This long-lasting belief is confirmed by the inscription on her rococo statue in the gallery.¹¹

The likenesses of St. Jerome and St. Columba in the capitulary is a seventeenth-century (?) section from the portrait gallery not entirely preserved to the present. Portraits of the local abbots, which are known to have decorated one of the rooms of the abbey before its fall to ruins between 1770 and 1772 and its annulment in 1816, have not survived to the present either.

The initial vision of the Tyniec Abbey, information about its abbots, local history and the history of the Benedictine order were propagated by member Stanisław Szczygielski (1616–1687). He published the Tyniec monograph as well as a history of Polish Benedictines. Szczygielski skillfully recorded the history of his region's past in a way which combined the acts of the government and the Church, including the Benedictines. To this goal, he made use of a rich and diverse base of information, including the Tyniec archive. His historical writings no doubt inspired the creative impulse behind the displays in Tyniec.

Łysiec (Święty Krzyż)

The Benedictine monastery at Lysiec was established at the beginning of the twelfth century. Within the next centuries it was rebuilt numerous times.¹³ At present we can appreciate the frescos from various decades in the eighteenth century as well as fragments of frescos preserved from the seventeenth century. This pilgrimage destination is known as the sanctuary of the Holy Cross relics, which were brought there most probably between 1286 and 1311.¹⁴ Until 1723 a separate

¹¹ Jasiński, Rodowód 170; Szczaniecki, Opactwo 72.

¹² Ozorowski E., "Szczygielski Stanisław", in Wyczawski H.E. (ed.), Słownik polskich teologów katolickich (Warsaw: 1983) 268–269; Krawczyk A., Historiografia krytyczna. Formowanie się nowożytnej postawy naukowej w polskim piśmiennictwie historycznym XVII w. (Lublin: 1994) 353–364 and passim; Brużdziński A., "Wkład zakonników w historiografię Polski w XVII i XVIII wieku", in Łobozek M. (ed.), Kultura intelektualna w zakonach polskich w XVII i XVIII wieku (Cracow: 2006) 89–90.

¹³ Derwich M., *Benedyktyński klasztor św. Krzyża na Lysej Górze w średniowieczu* (Warsaw – Wrocław: 1992); Derwich M., "Opactwo świętokrzyskie w epoce przedrozbiorowej", in Olszewski D. – Gryz R. (eds.), *Klasztor na Świętym Krzyżu w polskiej kulturze narodowej* (Kielce: 2000) 54–55.

¹⁴ Ibid. 55.

section of the vestry served as the Holy Cross chapel. In that year, the relics were moved to the nearby Oleśnicki family vault, erected between 1604 and 1620.¹⁵ The seventeenth-century frescos on the dome of that vault, in its central section, present Christ holding a cross and surrounded by Mary, John the Baptist and the twelve apostles. At the foot of each is a depiction of the tool of their suffering. St. Benedict is portrayed among the apostles. At his feet is included the insignia of the abbot's authority – a miter and crosier, together symbolizing the full paternal authority.¹⁶

On the underside of the crown of the dome are paintings from 1782 by Maciej Reichan portraying Old Testament prophets. In the pictures on the wall, the artist tells the story of the wood of the Holy Cross. The sequence of paintings begins with Empress Helen († 327) finding the Cross and closes with prince Emeric († 1031) presenting the relic to the bishop of Cracow and the Benedictine monks of Łysiec. According to a legend that dates back to the second half of the fourteenth century, ¹⁷ Emeric had received the relic from his father, Stephen († 1038), the king of Hungary, before embarking on his journey to Poland. The young prince was said to have spoken with an angel, who told him to leave the relic to the abbey which was to be built on Mount Łysiec. The legend was cultivated at the shrine throughout the late medieval and early modern period.

During the restoration of the monastery towards the end of the eighteenth century, a polychromy of patriarch St. Benedict and the glory of the order was added to the vestry vault. It bears witness to scenes from the life of saintly Benedictines such as bishop Theogerus († 1120). Seventeenth-century frescos in the vestry portray Abbot Stanisław Sierakowski, who was famous for his saintliness, in prayer. In the gallery, above the entrance to the Oleśnicki chapel, are illustrations of the persecutions which the Benedictines experienced at the hand of the Swedish army during the Second Northern War (1655–1660). Other frescos, most probably added during the eighteenth century, also por-

¹⁵ Pieniążek-Samek M., "Architektura i wyposażenie kościoła benedyktynów na Świętym Krzyżu w okresie nowożytnym – fundacje i fundatorzy", in Derwich M. – Bracha K. (eds.), *Z dziejów opactwa świętokrzyskiego* (Kielce: 2007) 80, 84, 86; Pielas J., "Oleśniccy herbu Debno a klasztor świętokrzyski," ibid. 59–65.

¹⁶ This description and the following after www.swietykrzyz.pl (04.02.2008).

¹⁷ Derwich, Benedyktyński klasztor 238–260.

tray the tragic events of the years of Swedish invasion, specifically the torture and murder of the inhabitants of the cloister.¹⁸

The martyrdom of well-known Church figures was recorded in the galleries during the eighteenth or possibly seventeenth century. Scenes which are still discernable show the suffering of St. Placid, a Benedictine abbot who died at the hand of the Saracens († 541) and the death of St. Bruno of Querfurt († 1009), who was tortured, along with his companions, by the Prussians. The wonder-working life, *vita anachoretica*, is fulfilled in the *vita activa* of Bruno of Querfurt.

Between 1789 and 1806, the canvases of Franciszek Smuglewicz were placed within the monastery church. They illustrate the early history of the order and the Lysiec monastery, such as St. Benedict's visit to his sister Scholastica and the finding of the Holy Cross. They also referred to the legend that connects the founding of the monastery with Prince Emeric.¹⁹

The extant source evidence shows that the medieval tradition of Łysiec was documented in the monastery as early as the close of the fifteenth century. A significant number of works of historiography referring to the area's past were written by the monks themselves or by friends of the abbey. All of the authors, in a style typical of that era, united events connected with the inception of the monastery to the increased fame of the relic hidden there. This is exemplified in the publication Narratio fundationis monasterii Montis Calvi in 1536. Authors of those works derived their knowledge from medieval chronicles, including monumental reviews of Polish history such as Annales seu Cronica Incliti Regni Polonia by Jan Długosz († 1480), as well as from local sources. Narratio had its sequels, which were circulated in handwritten and printed copies. The authors of those works behaved according to the tradition of the day: in reconstructing what had been previously formulated, they modified the texts at will and enriched the given descriptions with new facts.

The revival of historiographic activity as happened in the monastery by the eighteenth century is connected with the advent of early attempts to create a Benedictine congregation focused specifically

¹⁸ Ibid. 63–64.

¹⁹ CIP I, 1 Kielce nos. 118–126; Katalog Zabytków Sztuki w Polsce 3, 4 Powiat kielecki 62; Trzepizur D., "Obrazy Franciszka Smuglewicza w kościele pobenedyktyńskim na Świętym Krzyżu", Rocznik Muzeum Świętokrzyskiego 2 (1964) 231–270.

around Łysiec.²⁰ This was also, according to all probability, the inspiration of the imagery of the paintings decorating the abbey at the time, and the inscriptions accompanying them, the content of which was described above. Local historiography continued through the eighteenth century²¹ and was completed in the aforementioned mural.

The strong reliance of the paintings on written accounts of local history which had been based on local memory is seen in the lack of portraits of abbots in the Holy Cross monastery. The catalogues presenting their short biographies as well as the necrologies of the monks available in the eighteenth century do not go back further than the seventeenth century. By that time, knowledge about monks living in the Holy Cross Abbey at Łysiec during the sixteenth century, or earlier, had already become quite fragmented.²²

Sieciechów

The date of the founding of the monastery is still under discussion and falls between the end of the eleventh century and the first half of the twelfth century.²³ The past, which can be learned from the 1779 paintings on the walls of that church of the Black Monks, does not reach beyond the foundation of the abbey. Thus the tradition recorded by Jan Długosz, sometime before 1480, had been accepted that identified King Boleslaus the Brave (born 967–†1025) and palatine Sieciech as founders.²⁴ Portraits of abbots Józef Kurdwanowski and Wawrzyniec Bulcharewicz included in the murals on the walls of the main church nave commemorate the building of the new church,²⁵ whereas the portraits of Pope Clement XI and Benedict XIII commemorate the creation of the Polish Benedictine Congregation in 1709. The whole was to be under the patronage of 'Benedict, man of the life worth

²⁰ Kanior, Polska kongregacja 41-42.

²¹ The historiography of the abbey has been discussed by Derwich, *Benedyktyński klasztor* 115–130.

²² Ibid. 131–132.

²³ Ibid. 142; Derwich, "Opactwo świętokrzyskie" 53.

²⁴ CIP VII, ² Grójec no. 54; Katalog Žabytków Sztuki w Polsce, 3, 6 Powiat kozienicki 24–25. See also Wiśniowski E., "Z dziejów opactwa benedyktynów w Sieciechowie", Roczniki Humanistyczne 7, 2 (1958) 28 and passim.

²⁵ See Miszczak D., "Późnobarokowy kościół pobenedyktyński w Sieciechowie-Opactwie", Rocznik Muzeum Świętokrzyskiego 9 (1975) 367–383.

of respect' as well as the protector of the abbey, the Blessed Virgin Mary. 26

Jędrzejów

The Cistercian monastery in the town of Jędrzejów was founded in the middle of the twelfth century, after 1140. It became well known as the residence of chronicler and bishop of Cracow, Wincenty Kadłubek, who settled among the Cistercians after his resignation from the cathedral in 1218. He died in that monastery *in spe sanctitatis* in 1223. In 1633 his relics were unearthed and brought to the altar [Fig. 1], and in 1764 Pope Clement XIII confirmed the public veneration of this bishop.²⁷

The frescoes from 1734–1739 in the monastery church provide an interesting medium illuminating the mentality of the priests of Jędrze-jów Abbey. The paintings were to proclaim the history and honor of the Cistercian order. The beginning of the community is illustrated with the oldest monasteries from the years 1098–1115 in Citeux, La Ferté, Clairvaux, Pontigny, and Morimond. The gallery of the holy and blessed monks from the twelfth to fourteenth centuries opens with Bernard of Clairvaux [Fig. 2]. In the short biographies not only are virtues emphasized, as miraculous testimonies to the saintliness of these figures, but also the position which they achieved in the church as anointed bishops and cardinals. Also present are Cistercian popes [Fig. 3] and protectors from royal families, such as Teresa, Queen of Portugal († 1250) and the blessed Danish King Eric Plovpenning, who was killed in the same year.

The Jędrzejów Abbey's participation in the greatness of the order shown in this manner on the walls in the main nave is highlighted in the presbytery. Scenes painted on its vault portray the Jędrzejów monastery, the glorification of Wincenty, as he was carried from the abbey through the celestial gate by angels, as well as Mary commending the

²⁶ 'Vir vitæ venerabilis Benedictus.' For more on the congregation, see Kanior, *Polska kongregacja* 44–47; Kanior M., "Powstanie Kongregacji Benedyktyńskiej św. Krzyża w Polsce", *Analecta Cracoviensia* 8 (1967) 295–320.

²⁷ See Dobosz J. – Wetesko L., "Jędrzejów", in Wyrwa A.M. – Strzelczyk J. – Kaczmarek K. (eds.), Monasticon Cisterciense Poloniæ, vol. II, Katalog męskich klasztorów cysterskich na ziemiach polskich i dawnej Rzeczypospolitej (Poznań: 1999) 91–92; Olszewski D. (ed.), Cystersi w Polsce. W 850-lecie fundacji opactwa jędrzejowskiego (Kielce: 1990).



Fig. 1. Inscription commemorating the elevation of Wincenty Kadłubek's relics in 1633. Jędrzejów, Cistercian Abbey.



Fig. 2. [Col. Pl. III] St. Bernard of Clairvaux. Jędrzejów, Cistercian Abbey.

whole order to her Son. The murals and inscription on the arms of the transept complete the work, accenting the activity of preaching God's glory to all continents.²⁸

The memory of Wincenty Kadłubek has most likely been cultivated among the Cistercians since the thirteenth century and it is certain that they had already propagated his veneration in the fifteenth century. The question of whether or not he was officially admitted to the community, as is represented in the historiography of the monastery, or if

²⁸ See Rotter, "Treści i symbolika" 327–334; CIP I, 2 Andreovia nos. 51–71; Katalog Zabytków Sztuki w Polsce 3, 3 Powiat jędrzejowski 8, 10.



Fig. 3. Pope Eugene III of the Cistercian Order. Jedrzejów, Cistercian Abbey.

he was only a resident, the opinion that general modern history tends to lean towards, is still being discussed.²⁹ Efforts taken to count the bishop among the saints were accompanied by the construction of a chapel. This chapel of the blessed incarnation of the Virgin Mary and the blessed Wincenty, built as an extension of the monastery church, was completed prior to 1742. The interior decorations include important events in the life of the 'blessed monk' [Fig. 4 and 5] as well as miraculous events which resulted from his intercession. Only those miracles which were documented and published after the excavation of his bones were included and these supernatural interventions do not reach beyond the close of the sixteenth century.³⁰ These scenes complement the thematic displays on the nave and in the presbytery.³¹

Wąchock

The Wachock Cistercian monastery, founded around 1179,32 is estimated to have the oldest preserved evidence of the cultivation of its

Dobosz – Wetesko, "Jędrzejów" 92.
 For more on this, see Kowalski W. – Olszewski D., Parafia Trójcy Świętej w Jędrzejowie na tle dekanatu. Zarys dziejów (Kielce: 2003) 126-127.

³¹ Katalog Zabytków Sztuki w Polsce 3, 3 Powiat jędrzejowski 8.

³² Borkowska M., *Ž dziejów opactwa cystersów w Wąchocku* (Kielce: 1998) 14–19; Dobosz J. – Wetesko L., "Wąchock", in *Monasticon* 329–331.



Fig. 4. Bishop Wincenty Kadłubek approaches the monastery. Jędrzejów, Cistercian Abbey.



Fig. 5. Bishop Wincenty Kadłubek admitted to the monastery. Jędrzejów, Cistercian Abbey.

tradition. Two epigraphs written on sandstone tablets dating back to the second half of the sixteenth century commemorate the foundation of the abbey. The inscriptions tell of the arrival of monks from Morimond in Burgundy and propagate the memory of bishop Gedeon (or Gedko) as a founder of the Wachock monastery.³³ Their appearance may generally be explained by the increase in popularity of historical topics throughout that century.³⁴ Evidence of such contemporary interest in the Wachock monastery is seen in the well-preserved fragments of frescos in the monastery galleries. Among them is the Ethimologia monachi, which was painted next to the likeness of Gotard, likely the abbot between 1250 and 1255. Evidence of other similar likenesses allow one to assume that the group of abbots portrayed on the walls of the galleries most certainly predate the first half of the sixteenth century. Their portraits were explained with inscriptions, known at present only from a seventeenth-century handwritten copy titled Antiquum memoriale monasterii eiusdem Vanchocensium abbatum, a tempore fundationis usque ad nostra tempora [...]. According to all probability the manuscript was prepared at the initiative of Rafał Zaborowski, the abbot between 1523-1540, and later used by an unknown artist.³⁵

'Vera effigies divi Benedicti' and 'vera effigies divi Bernardi' on pictures from the beginning of the seventeenth century are most likely remnants from a larger gallery. The monastery was destroyed in the middle of the seventeenth century during a war with Sweden and its building did not reach its completion until 1696.³⁶ The early ages of the expansion of the order were remembered in the frescos in the church during the second half of the eighteenth century, which picture the first abbots of Citeaux as well as the abbeys of Calatrava and Aula Regia. In the second half of the eighteenth century a picture portraying the founder of the local abbey, Bishop Gedeon is also in the records.³⁷

³³ In this context, one of the inscriptions under discussion was published by a seventeenth-century historian and a canon of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulcher of Jerusalem, Frater Nakielski Samuel, *Miechovia sive promptuarium antiquitatum Monasterij Miechoviensis* (Cracoviæ, Officina Francisci Caesarei: 1634) 22; cf. Dobosz – Wetesko, "Wachock" 330–331.

[&]quot;Wąchock" 330–331.

34 CIP I, 5 Włoszczowa nos. 133, 134. Cf. Jakimowicz T., Temat historyczny w sztuce ostatnich Jagiellonów (Warsaw – Poznań: 1985) 22–25.

³⁵ For more on these foundations, see Borkowska, *Z dziejów opactwa* 167–168.

³⁶ Dobosz – Wetesko, "Wachock", 334.

³⁷ CIP I, 5 Włoszczowa passim; Katalog Zabytków Sztuki w Polsce 3, 2 Powiat iłżecki 34.

Religious Orders and History in Murals and Inscriptions

Such cycles presenting historical-hagiographic paintings intermixed with theologically and symbolically moralizing works were mutually complementary. The examples discussed are not unique to the region of Little Poland. In the eighteenth century such scenes were common on the walls of Cistercian churches and monasteries in other regions: Silesia (Lubiaż, Krzeszów), Kuyavia (Koronowo), Greater Poland (Łekno, Lad), Pomerania (Kołbacz, Oliwa). The motifs that have been discussed here also decorated Cistercian sanctuaries in other locations in central Europe. All of these works illustrated the history of specific monasteries and their founders against the backdrop of the activities of the order as a whole. The figures of saints were included to highlight the Cistercian order's connection with the Benedictine tradition as well as its importance in the glorification of the Catholic Church and its missionary work. The continuation of local tradition was easiest to show in the gallery of the portraits of the abbots.³⁸ As illustrated above, the subject matter of history referred to on the walls of the Benedictine churches and monasteries was very similar throughout; this was true of the female houses as well.39

It is difficult to give a detailed evaluation of every such an iconographic program in its entirety, as in each example analyzed above only a fragment of the decorative paintings has remained.⁴⁰ We are also not well acquainted with the contents of older paintings which were replaced most often in the eighteenth century. Rules of the order forbade the Cistercians from possessing sculptures, and paintings were allowed only on crosses. In spite of this, artistic works used in service of the tradition can be seen in their churches as early as the later Middle Ages and Renaissance, although these focused on displaying the founders.⁴¹ Murals depicting people appeared in Cistercian churches

³⁸ Kaczmarek – Witkowski, "Historia i tradycja" passim.

³⁹ Rotter L., *Duchowoćś i historia benedyktynek w symbolice dekoracji malarskiej kościoła w Staniątkach* (Cracow: 2004); Stępień U., "Wyposażenie kościoła pw. Świętego Michała. Przyczynek do dziejów kultury artystycznej benedyktynek sandomierskich", in Burek K. (ed.), *Klasztor Panien Benedyktynek w historii i kulturze Sandomierza* (Sandomierz: 2003) 95, 104.

⁴⁰ The decorations extant at the Jędrzejów monastery seem exceptionally well preserved, although some epigraphs may have been lost.

⁴¹ Kaczmarek – Witkowski, "Historia i tradycja" 389–390; Łużyniecka E., *The Architecture of Cistercian Monasteries: Daughter Houses of Lubiqż and other Silesian Cenobia* (Wrocław: 2002) 26. On the founders' role in monastic tradition, cf. Stöber K., *Late*

in Little Poland at the turn of the fourteenth century. ⁴² Those which covered the walls of the Holy Cross Benedictines' church at that time were painted thanks to the inspiration and financial support of King Władysław Jagiełło (Ladislaus Jogaila). ⁴³

The truth is that we cannot be certain as to what degree the following paintings were connected with the content of the previous exposition. Furthermore, the difficulty which arises in dating them does not help in answering the question as to whether or not one can speak of a clear connection between the appearance of such works and the search for a renewed spiritual life. Keeping such aims in mind, early modern references to the era of the expansion of the orders, to their 'golden age', seem conscientious and purposeful. Such displays helped in the 'propagation of veneration'. It is also reasonable to assume that they aided in the liturgy and served an educational purpose. The eighteenth-century *Ratio studiosorum* of the Polish Benedictine monks included universal history as well as Polish history, and dogmatic and moral theology received preference.⁴⁴

Portraits in monasteries of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulcher of Jerusalem in Miechów and in Skaryszew also bear testimony of the veneration of its founders as well as measurement of the rank of a religious community with the position its members had reached in the Catholic Church. Similar ambition was documented on the walls of mendicant chapels. A good example of this on the terrain of Little Poland is the Franciscan church in Nowy Korczyn, next to the monastery, which was built in 1257. Frescoes illustrating the founders of the friary, Boleslaus the Chaste, who is accepting the belt of St. Francis, and the veiled Kinga, among the Franciscan saints and popes of that

Medieval Monasteries and their Patrons: England and Wales, c. 1300–1540. Studies in the History of Medieval Religion 29 (Woodbridge: 2007).

⁴² Domasłowski J. – Karłowska-Kamzowa A. – Kornecki M. – Markiewiczówna H., *Gotyckie malarstwo ścienne w Polsce* (Poznań: 1984) 16, 25, 28–29, 35.

⁴³ Derwich, Benedyktyński klasztor 521–522, 537.

⁴⁴ On the educational programs applied by religious orders in early modern Poland, see Flaga J., *Formacja i kształcenie duchowieństwa zakonnego w Rzeczypospolitej w XVII i XVIII wieku* (Lublin: 1998) 190–238; Kanior, *Polska kongregacja* 131–133.

⁴⁵ ČIP I, 4 Miechovia nos. 134, 137, 148; Wiśniewski J., Dekanat radomski (Radom: 1911) 340–341.

⁴⁶ Daniluk M., "Franciszkanie w Polsce", in Bieńkowski L. – Hemperek P. – Kamiński S. – Misiurek J. – Stawecka K. – Stępień A. – Szafrański A. – Szlaga J. – Weiss A. (eds.), *Encyklopedia katolicka*, vol. V (Lublin: 1989) 494; Kłoczowski J., "Bracia mniejsi w Polsce średniowiecznej", in Kłoczowski J. (ed.), *Franciszkanie w Polsce*

order. The initiator of the creation of such paintings and their inventor, Guardian Andrzej Błędowski, had introduced a reformed way of communal living of the brethren three years earlier.⁴⁷

Sandomierz

Only exceptionally can connections with local medieval history be found presented in paintings and inscriptions in diocesan churches. For this reason, the scenes shown on the paneling inside the collegiate church, now the cathedral, in Sandomierz are quite unique. In 1708 the Sandomierz colligate chapter contracted Charles de Prevot († 1737), who was working for Polish magnates, to paint a series of twelve paintings presenting the sufferings of the first Christians and the circumstances of their death according to the liturgical calendar Martyrologium Romanum [Fig. 6]. Four paintings located under the loft, also from the brush of Prevot, provide the culmination of these scenes. They show the martyrdom of the citizens of Sandomierz, including the massacre of Sandomierz burghers and Dominicans who were killed during the Tatar invasion of 1260 [Fig. 7]. This is completed by paintings of local events that took place much later. These include the detonation of the castle by the Swedish troops as they abandoned the city in 1656, as well as the ritual murder of a local orphan, which was said to have been committed by Jews in 1710.48

The initiative for the exhibit came from Sandomierz archdeacon, Father Stefan Żuchowski. He was interested in history and art and spent time traveling abroad, thus his wide collection of books was enriched by purchases made in various Italian cities. ⁴⁹ Żuchowski was known primarily for his aggressive anti-Semitism. Testimony to this is found in his two books, a portion of which document his own efforts

średniowiecznej, part 1, Franciszkanie na ziemiach polskich, Zakony franciszkańskie w Polsce 1 (Cracow: 1983) 17.

 ⁴⁷ CIP I, 3 Busko no. 96; Katalog Zabytków Sztuki w Polsce 3, 1 Powiat buski 42–43; Kantak K., Franciszkanie polscy, vol. I (Cracow: 1937) 32; ibid. vol. II (1938) 385, note 38.
 ⁴⁸ Makarewicz S., Bazylika katedralna w Sandomierzu (Sandomierz: 1976) 63–66;

Makarewicz S., *Bazylika kaledralna w Sandomierzu* (Sandomierz: 1976) 63–66; Kamuda D., "Malarstwo", in Kiryk F. (ed.), *Dzieje Sandomierza XVI–XVIII w.*, vol. II (Warsaw: 1993) 179–180.

⁴⁹ Rok B., "Europejskie podróże duchowieństwa małopolskiego XVIII wieku", in Kowalski W. – Muszyńska J. (eds.), *Kościót katolicki w Matopolsce w średniowieczu i we wczesnym okresie nowożytnym* (Kielce – Gdańsk: 2001) 460.



Fig. 6. Part of Martirologium Romanum. Sandomierz, Collegiate Church.



Fig. 7. The massacre of Sandomierz Dominicans, 1260. Sandomierz, Collegiate Church.

as an earnest and successful promoter of anti-Semitic indictments instigated in 1698 and in 1710. With his books, Zuchowski intended to provide evidence of the reality of ritual murder resulting from the ageold Jewish hatred for Christians. Żuchowski demonstrated that this enmity was also expressed in damage done to businesses owned by Christians. It also collectively presented lews alongside the thirteenthcentury Mongol invaders and Protestant aggressors from Sweden, who had invaded the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in 1655, as being enemies of the 'true faith', that is, Catholicism. A local effect of that hatred was illustrated in the paintings described above, located under the choir. The contribution of medieval and early modern martyrs from among the clergy and burghers of Sandomierz was a way of supplementing the sacrifices for the faith borne by the first Christians. This context, therefore, adds to the scenes of the Martyrologium Romanum. 50 Żuchowski's way of thinking was conceivably shared by many of his contemporaries. The cult of the thirteenth-century Sandomierz martyrs was very popular nationwide as early as the following century, and their veneration continued to flourish in early modern times.⁵¹

In one of the aforementioned works, Żuchowski depicts Piotr of Krępa, the leader of the defense of the town of Sandomierz during the Tatar siege of 1259–1260. On 2 February Piotr surrendered the town to the Tatars at the insistence of their allies, Russian princes, who deceived him with promises that the Poles would be treated leniently. In truth, the Tatars murdered most of the defenders and took a significant number of young people into captivity. Although the position of Piotr of Krępa was criticized by authors chronologically close to the Tatars' invasion, those in the second half of the fifteenth century justified his behavior. The lord of Krępa was no longer portrayed as an opportunist, but as a victim, or even martyr. This is also how he is recorded in the tradition of Sandomierz, 52 which was fuelled by the

⁵⁰ For more on these aspects of Żuchowski's creation, see Kowalski W., "W obronie wiary. Ks. Stefan Żuchowski – między wzniosłością a okrucieństwem", in Kowalski W. – Muszyńska J. (eds.), *Żydzi wśród chrześcijan w dobie szlacheckiej Rzeczypospolitej* (Kielce: 1996) 221–233. Cf. Teter M., *Jews and Heretics in Catholic Poland: A Beleaguered Church in the Post-Reformation Era* (Cambridge: 2006) 2–3 and passim.

⁵¹ The Tartars' incursions and the immediate circumstances leading to the surrender of the town have been reconstructed by Krakowski S., "Region kielecki jako teren najazdów w drugiej połowie XIII wieku", *Rocznik Muzeum Świętokrzyskiego* 8 (1973) 191–195. The cult has been thoroughly analyzed by Stopka K., "Męczennicy sandomierscy. Legenda i rzeczywistość", *Nasza Przeszłość* 80 (1993) 51–99.

⁵² The relevant historiography has been discussed by Rutkowska-Płachcińska A., "Podanie o Piotrze z Krepy w świetle rekopisów Rocznika świetokrzyskiego nowego

Polish hagiographic writers of the seventeenth century. They stressed the saintliness of his life and the heroism of his death although there were no grounds for such assumptions.⁵³ This is why Żuchowski calls on Piotr and those 'honorable citizens' who died with him to help in finalizing the anti-Semitic process in the place sanctified by their blood in order to spare further 'costs and turbulences'.⁵⁴

The earliest information about the fate of the friary at the neighboring Dominican church of St. James was most likely recorded in a chronicle of the Polish province of the order. The chronicle would have been known to Jan Długosz in the fifteenth century, but has not been preserved.55 Abraham Bzowski, chronicler of the Order of Preachers in Poland, fabricated the narrative of the 1260 martyrdom and published it in 1606 and 1616.56 A chapel was erected c. 1640-1642 as part of St. James's church and was dedicated to the local martyrs. In 1715 it was also decorated by Charles de Prevot. A sequence of paintings completed by him show the martyrdom of fortynine friars slain by Tatars in 1260 [Fig. 8] along with the martyrdom of Frater Augustyn Rogali, a member of the monastery. He promoted the cult of the Sandomierz Dominicans, and was murdered by George II Rákóczi's soldiers, who pillaged that region as allies of the Swedish king in 1657.⁵⁷ Rogali's sacrifice gave new vigor to the medieval tradition of the place.

Enemies of the State and Faith, and a Besieged Mentality

The mentioned anti-Semitic writings penned by Stefan Żuchowski allow us to more accurately define the intentions behind the realization

oraz późniejszych przekazów", in *Mente et litteris. O kulturze i społeczeństwie wieków średnich* (Poznań: 1984) 263–270. The importance of those events for the creation of the family tradition of the Oleśnickis has been shown by Pielas, "Oleśniccy herbu Dębno a klasztor świętokrzyski" 52–58; Pielas J., *Oleśniccy herbu Dębno w XVI–XVII wieku* (Kielce: 2007) 23–28.

⁵³ Some of the relevant medieval chronicles suggest that, unlike the majority of Sandomierz inhabitants, Piotr of Krępa was not slain but taken hostage; Stopka, "Męczennicy sandomierscy" 83–84.

⁵⁴ Kowalski, "W obronie wiary" 228–229.

⁵⁵ This argument has been put forward by Labuda G., Zaginiona kronika z pierw-szej połowy XIII wieku w Rocznikach Królestwa Polskiego Jana Długosza. Próba rekonstrukcji (Poznań: 1983) 159.

⁵⁶ Stopka, "Meczennicy sandomierscy" 87–88.

⁵⁷ A detailed description has been provided by Kamuda, "Malarstwo" 181–182.



Fig. 8. [Col. Pl. IV] The massacre of Sandomierz Dominicans, 1260. Sandomierz, St. Jacob's Church.

of the artistic display. The world in which the designer of the Sandomierz mural lived was the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, which was destroyed by wars between 1648 and 1660, and again between 1702 and 1717. These wars were caused by invasions of Protestant and Orthodox neighbors and presented as being waged in the defense of Catholicism, thus being the call of most residents of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. The fight against the invaders consolidated the Catholic majority, who more widely and effectively than in

the first half of the seventeenth century turned against internal enemies, that is, the local Protestants, who by the turn of the seventeenth century, having been forced into the defensive, were no longer a threat to the Catholic Church.⁵⁸ The triumph of the Catholic Church, and specifically of an extremely radical faction of the clergy was not, however, complete in light of the considerable presence of Iews.⁵⁹ Tolerance for their religion, understood as an ability to completely isolate its adherents, was necessary due to the lack of another way to deal with this problem, apart from conversion. However, for a significant number of gentry and nobility, as well as for the ecclesiastical institutions, the presence of Jews was necessary for economic reasons. When their superiority in trade and crafts became too troublesome, it was met with the expulsion of Jews from the city or accusations of ritual murders. Such acts were said to be done in defense of the faith. This calling easily gained a hearing thanks to the creation of a conducive atmosphere. It was based on Catholic doctrine and a national tradition of social conformism and community solidarity. These foundations were strengthened by fear of natural disasters and economic failure, the causes of which could not be otherwise explained. The Sandomierz archdeacon lived in such a world, and it was this world that he presented on the walls of the local collegiate church he was affiliated to. It was a world besieged by enemies of the Polish nation and the Church, who, as a result, spilled their own blood as an offering after the model of the first Christians.60

Other enemies since time immemorial were the savage riders from the southeast. The thirteenth-century Mongol invasions were continued with regular pillaging expeditions of the Tatars. As late as the

⁵⁸ The national and religious aspects of the mid-seventeenth-century wars have been shown in greater detail by Kowalski W., "From the 'Land of Diverse Sects' to National Religion: Converts to Catholicism and Reformed Franciscans in Early Modern Poland", *Church History* 70, 3 (2001) 482–526. See also his "Change in Continuity: Post-Tridentine Rural and Township Parish Life in the Cracow Diocese", *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 35, 3 (2004) 689–715.

⁵⁹ It is estimated that the Jews were 3.5 to 4 per cent of the entire population in Poland-Lithuania in the first half of the seventeenth century and c. 7 per cent in 1764; Topolski J., *Polska w czasach nowożytnych (1501–1795)* (Poznań: 1999) 531; Guldon Z. – Kowalski W., "Jewish Settlement in the Polish Commonwealth in the Second Half of the Eighteenth Century", *Polin. Studies in Polish Jewry* 18 (2005) 307–308.

⁶⁰ A profound examination of this perception has been provided by Teter, Jews and Heretics passim; see also Kowalski, "From the 'Land of Diverse Sects' to National Religion" passim; Hundert G.-D., Jews in Poland-Lithuania in the Eighteenth Century: A Genealogy of Modernity (Berkeley: 2004).

mid-seventeenth century their divisions penetrated as far as the Vistula. The Turks were a constant threat to the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and both countries were often in a state of war. On the other hand, being a neighboring oriental culture, the splendor of the Sultan's court was not without influence on the lifestyles of the Polish gentry. Fascination with the orient showed itself in the adaptation of elements of oriental design to clothing and weapons. However, the fascination quickly faded into horror awakened by the military might of Turkey and ruthlessness of the Tatars under them. This explains the popularity of this topic in the artwork displayed in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries as well as the search for the beginning of these contacts.⁶¹

Memory of the destruction of the Łysiec Abbey as a result of the Mongol invasion during the winter of 1259–1260 is therefore not surprising. A plaque hung there before 1633 commemorating the relocation of the bones of the massacred Benedictine monks to an honorable place and their solemn burial is evidence of this memory. In 1694, the Cistercians of Koprzywnica erected a similar commemoration of their fellow brothers, which says '[t]hose who often willingly chanted angelic laudations to the Lord in the choir were slaughtered by the Tatars and other enemies for their faith and religion'.

On the other hand, it is difficult to determine the depth of collective memory in the not too distant town of Iłża. In 1744 two plaques were built into the exterior wall of a local parish church. The inscription on one of them mentions the destruction perpetrated '[b]y the eastern barbarian Tatars with their duke Bato[s]'65 as well as the calamity which afflicted Iłża during the Swedish invasion between 1655–1657. Information concerning the thirteenth-century event is not dated. The identification of Batu as the leader of the Tatar regiment which

⁶¹ For more on this, see Bogucka M., "Szlachta polska wobec Wschodu tureckotatarskiego: między fascynacją a przerażeniem (XVI–XVIII w.)", Śląski Kwartalnik Historyczny Sobótka 37, 3 (1982) 185–193; Tyszkiewicz J., Tatarzy na Litwie i w Polsce. Studia z dziejów XIII–XVIII w. (Warsaw: 1989).

 $^{^{62}}$ This foray of the Mongols and its aftermath has been discussed by Derwich, $\it Benedykty\'nski~klasztor~57-58.$

⁶³ CIP I, 1 Kielce no. 2.

⁶⁴ '[q]ui aliquoties et angelicis intenti laudibus psalientes Domino in choro crudeliter a Tartaris et aliis hostibus in odium fidei et religionis sunt trucidati'; Wiśniewski J., *Dekanat sandomierski* (Radom: 1915) 65.

^{65 &#}x27;[a]b oriente barbaries Tartarorum cum duce suo Batto'; CIP VII, 1 Radom no. 21.

was said to have prowled around the area of Iłża was taken from the *Annales* by Długosz, who connects the events with the first invasion of the Mongols in 1241. However, the whole reconstruction is faulty. In the year that the Tatars were in the area of Iłża, Batu Khan, the leader of the entire European effort, was not present at all in Poland. It is known, however, that the Mongols burned down the town's defenses during a subsequent invasion at the end of 1259.⁶⁶

Mention of the Tatar invasion in the plaque text analyzed here is only an introduction to a more detailed description of destruction which affected the city and its parish church during the mid-seventeenth century. The reason for these mentions was the town fire in 1744, whose course and results are illustrated on the following plaque.⁶⁷ Up into the twentieth century, knowledge of the Tatar road, along which they were said to have led abducted prisoners, and of the mound outside the city where bones of the murdered burghers were said to have been found, existed in the living memory of the town's citizens.⁶⁸ The author of both texts was without a doubt the town parson, Father Józef Rogalli. It is also without a doubt that relevant writings in the *Annales* of Jan Długosz were known to him. Unfortunately, we are unable to confirm if he had been inspired by local memory of the ravages of the thirteenth century, or if his erudition instigated a wider understanding of the visits of the Mongols among his contemporaries.

Historical Documentation as Inspiration for Murals and Inscriptions, and their Social Appeal

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, knowledge of the past was extracted from the *Annales* of Jan Długosz and, to a lesser degree, from the works of sixteenth-century historians such as Marcin Kromer. Early modern historians were aware of the importance of referring to the source (documents, local chronicles, biographies), but did not abandon the detailed narration of the fifteenth-century historiographer.⁶⁹ Długosz's work circulated

⁶⁶ Krakowski, "Region kielecki" 184–193; Labuda, Zaginiona kronika 213–221.

⁶⁷ CIP VII, 1 Radom no. 20.

⁶⁸ Lipińska O., "Geneza i rozwój osadnictwa Iłży w okresie średniowiecznym", Biuletyn Kwartalny Radomskiego Towarzystwa Naukowego 16, 3 (1979) 19–20.

⁶⁹ For more on this, see Krawczyk, *Historiografia* 71–164.

in about a hundred copies before it was printed in its first edition between the years 1711-1712, and in a second edition between the vears 1761-1777.70 In 1634 Samuel Nakielski published a monumental monograph of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulcher of Jerusalem in Poland, in which he included several medieval documents.⁷¹ His publication was followed by others, among which was the previously mentioned monograph of the abbey in Tyniec by Stanisław Szczygielski.⁷² Such publications must have inspired similar investigations in the archives.⁷³ For the Cistercians, the authority was without a doubt Augustinus Satorius, who published in 1700 a compendium of the knowledge of the order, which was meant to commemorate the 600th anniversary of its founding.⁷⁴ Not without significance was also the Benedictine tradition, confirmed as early as the eighth century, of compiling registers of bishops. 75 For this reason, it is not surprising that the aforementioned paintings in the Jedrzejów Abbev are a good illustration of the limited originality of the Polish Cistercians' historical writing and their dependence on models of western hagiographers.76

The question of a wider reception of the content described here must remain without an answer. The model of eremitism was not especially popular in the eighteenth-century Polish-Lithuanian Com-

⁷⁰ See Barycz H., Szlakami dziejopisarstwa staropolskiego. Studia nad historiografią w. XVI–XVIII (Wrocław: 1981) 72–130; Dymmel P., Tradycja rękopiśmienna Roczników Jana Długosza. Studium analityczne ksiąg X–XII (Warsaw: 1992) 5, 15.

⁷¹ Cf. note 33 of his chapter.

⁷² Cf. note 12. The editorial practices of the day have been discussed by Perzanowski Z., "Polska historiografia o polskich siedemnastowiecznych edycjach dokumentów", in *Miscellanea Historico-Archivistica*, vol. I (Warsaw – Łódź: 1985) 215–222.

⁷³ The aforementioned list of historical writings is not complete and may be supplemented with other monastic chronicles, such as, for example, an account of the events at the Szczyrzyc abbey, which starts as early as 1234; see Marszalska J.M., "Najważniejsze źródła rękopiśmienne do dziejów klasztoru oo. cystersów w Szczyrzycu", *Nasza Przeszłość* 104 (2005) 37–40.

⁷⁴ Cistercium bis-tertium; see Kaczmarek – Witkowski, "Historia i tradycja" 410–411.

Western medieval catalogues of dignitaries have been analyzed by Szymański J., zagadnień średniowiecznej biografistyki. Katalogi dostojnicze. Studium źródłoznawcze (Lublin: 1968) 201–202 and passim.

⁷⁶ See Borkowska U., "Hagiografia polska (wiek XVI–XVII)", in Rechowicz M. (ed.), *Dzieje teologii katolickiej w Polsce*, vol. II, *Od odrodzenia do oświecenia*, 1 *Teologia humanistyczna* (Lublin: 1975) 487–488; Leszczyński H., "Studia w klasztorach cysterskich XIII–XIX w.", in Strzelczyk J. (ed.), *Historia i kultura cystersów w dawnej Polsce i ich europejskie związki* (Poznań: 1987) 348–353.

monwealth. There was, however, a vested interest in the past.⁷⁷ One can get the impression that the scenes which portray activity of the Benedictine and Cistercian abbeys spreading the gospel in the first centuries of their existence were to compensate for their lesser priestly effort during late medieval and early modern times. These orders showed themselves unique in the modern world, in which pastoral handbooks recommended the model for priests who were active in their community, good organizers, sermonizers and shepherds.⁷⁸

Questions as to the reception of the method used to present these ideas must go unanswered. In order to bring the deeds of distant ancestors closer to the recipients of the time, artists presented elements of clothing and landscape familiar to early modern reality. Such was the decision of Charles de Prevot in Sandomierz, Andrzej Radwański in Jędrzejów, Franciszek Smuglewicz in the painting in the abbey at Łysiec, not to mention other artists unknown to us today. This measure was most likely also often the result of a limited knowledge of medieval material culture. Less often this resulted in slight archaism. It is permissible to believe that all of the artistic exhibitions mentioned here were successful in meeting the expectations set for art at the time in aesthetics, didactics, and a desire to have an emotional influence on the audience.

⁷⁷ This has been discussed in greater detail by Rok B., Kalendarze polskie czasów saskich (Wrocław: 1985) and Falińska M., Przeszłość a teraźniejszość. Studium z dziejów świadomości historycznej społeczeństwa staropolskiego (Warsaw: 1986).

⁷⁸ Główka D., "Przewodnik, inicjator, adwersarz? Uwagi o miejscu plebana w społeczności wiejskiej w XVII–XVIII wieku na przykładzie diecezji płockiej", in Slusarska M. (ed.), *Dwór, plebania, rodzina chłopska. Szkice z dziejów wsi polskiej XVII i XVIII wieku* (Warsaw: 1998); cf. Po-chia Hsia R., *The World of Catholic Reneval, 1540–1770* (New York: 2005) 111–126 and passim; cf. Schorn-Schütte L., *Evangelische Geistlichkeit in der frühen Neuzeit* (Gütersloh: 1996).

⁷⁹ For more on the ways in which past events and personalities were portrayed in the early modern epoch, see Tomkiewicz W., "Aktualizm i aktualizacja w malarstwie polskim XVII wieku", *Biuletyn Historii Sztuki* 13, 1 (1951) 55–94; 13, 2–3 (1951) 5–46; Kruszelnicki Z., *Historyzm i kult przeszłości w sztuce pomorskiej XVI–XVIII wieku* (Warsaw: 1984).

⁸⁰ Patterns of the Gothic style were referred to first of all in early modern funeral sculpture; see Kaczmarek – Witkowski, "Historia i tradycja" 408–410. The reasons why Gothic motifs gained popularity in seventeenth-century Poland have been discussed by Samek J., "Nawrót do gotyku w sztuce Krakowa 1 połowy XVII wieku", Folia Historiæ Artium 5 (1968) 71–130. On the early modern reception of medieval art pieces, see Jurkowlaniec G., Epoka nowożytna wobec średniowiecza. Pamiątki przeszłości, cudowne wizerunki, dzieła sztuki (Wrocław: 2008).

⁸¹ The aforementioned expectations have been commented on by Karpowicz M., "Uwagi o przemianach malarstwa i rzeźby polskiej w latach 1711–1740", in *Sztuka 1 pol. XVIII wieku* (Warsaw: 1981) 96–97.

The decorative paintings and inscriptions accompanying them were not always created with the goal of expressing a higher ideal, however. Between 1560 and 1580 the walls of one of the cellars in the center of Lublin, which at the time housed a wine-bar, were decorated with numerous lewd drawings of men and women.⁸² Although the arrangements are generally difficult to read, they are illustrations of excerpts from Aeneid by Vergil and Odes by Horace. The iconographic presentations illustrate the texts (written in Latin and German), which play a more important role than the inscriptions accompanying the paintings discussed above. The compositions in the Lublin wine cellar illustrate moral and erotic themes, and the main motif is Venus-Fortune. One of the paintings showing marital infidelity and, later, regret was inspired by the well-known biography Historia Alexandri Magni, regis Macedonia, de præliis, circulating in Europe in numerous copies from the tenth century.83 Another scene portrays a woman sitting with her naked legs holding a phallus. With her hands she holds up an overcoat on which can be seen swords, spears, shields, and mitres. This allegory symbolizes the triumph of love. It must have been inspired by a portraval of the triumph of death, well known in the later Middle Ages and Renaissance, in which death is shown as skeleton with a scythe. The aforementioned articles of armory and clothing have been thrown at her feet. Such a transposition of a well-known topic is to remind the audience that not only death, but also love is something that everyone is subordinate to, no matter their position in society.84

The iconic and epigraphic monuments that have been analyzed here, in their parts which point to the distant past, bear witness to the contemporary erudition and the ascendancy of written culture over oral tradition. At the same time, this analysis demonstrates how, in compliance with the common practice of the age, oral and written traditions were mutually supportive, complementing one another.⁸⁵

⁸² A detailed analysis of the Lublin wine-bar presentations has been provided by Dutkiewicz J.-E., "Malowidła w XVI w. w tzw. Winiarni w Lublinie", *Studia Renesansowe* 2 (1957) 134–211.

⁸³ T. Michałowska, Średniowieczne (Warsaw: 1995) 650.

⁸⁴ Wilhelm-Schaffer I., Gottes Beamter und Spielman des Teufels. Der Tod in Spätmittelalter und Früher Neuzeit (Cologne: 1999) 249–281.

⁸⁵ Fox A., "Remembering the Past in Early Modern England: Oral and Written Tradition", *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 6th Series 9 (London: 1999) 233–256.

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'O FUNDATRIX BEGGINARUM': ST. BEGGA AND HER OFFICE IN EARLY MODERN BEGUINE SCHOLARSHIP AND MUSICAL SOURCES

Pieter Mannaerts

Introduction

On December 20, 1626, a special ceremony took place in the Brussels beguinage church of St. Catherine, celebrating the official recognition of St. Begga as the patron saint of the beguinages. It was attended by the archduchess Isabella Clara Eugenia, the papal nuncio Franciscus a Balneo, the cardinal Alphonso de la Cueva, the archbishop of Mechelen, Jacobus Boonen, the marquis Ambrosius Spinola, the count of Emden, and 'the entire court with many other princes and counts'. The beguines of Brussels had striven for the recognition of Begga for some time, and to this end, they had urged the papal nuncio and the bishops to introduce the feast of Begga everywhere in the Low Countries. In the sermon during the service, the Dominican Franciscus de Vivero explained the importance of the event and presented his arguments in favor of Begga's patronship.²

This celebration is remarkable in several respects. It resulted from, and gave a new stimulus to a renewed devotional, scholarly and artistic interest in the beguines and their history, and marked the prominence of the Merovingian saint, Begga, in this history. Furthermore, the presence of the archduchess and dignitaries underlined the importance that was attached to it by the politically and religiously powerful.

¹ Elias of St. Theresia [Wils Joannes Baptista], Het Gheestelyck Palays der Beggijnhoven in drij boecken verdeylt; waarvan het eerste bewijst S. Begga waerachtelijck der Beggijnen fondatersse te zijn (Antwerp, Hieronymus Verdussen: 1628) 117: 'ende t'gheheel hof met noch veel andere Princen ende Graven'.

² Ibid. 117; Mosheim Johannes Laurentius, De Beghardis et Beguinabus Commentarius, ed. G.H. Martini (Leipzig, Weidmann: 1790) 75; Hallmann E., Die Geschichte des Ursprungs der belgischen Beghinen nebst einer authentischen Berichtigung der im 17. Jahrhundert durch Verfälschung von Urkunden in derselben angestifteten Verwirrung (Berlin: 1843) 26–29; Philippen L.J.M., De begijnhoven. Oorsprong, Geschiedenis, Inrichting (Antwerp: 1918) 152–153. Elias of St. Theresia remarks that he eagerly awaits the publication of Vivero's arguments ('diemen met wonder begeerten verwacht').

Despite the prestigious nature of the celebration, the surviving music that is intimately related to the veneration of Begga as the patron saint of the beguinages has not received any scholarly attention thus far.³ The music deserves of a closer study, however, because it does not only report on the musical and liturgical veneration of Begga in the early seventeenth century, but also documents the largely unstudied episode of plainchant in the early modern period, its relationship to devotional and political promotion of saints and to the religious communities in the Low Countries.⁴

In the Contra-Reformatory conceptualisation of the past, religious communities were often considered ecclesiastical institutions, even those that did not fully fit this category, which implied specific features, such as a formal(ized) organisation, a strong hierarchy, and manifold regulations. During the decades following the Council of Trent, and especially during the seventeenth century, a revival of ecclesiastical institutions and a new flourishing in their intellectual and artistic life took place, particularly stimulated by the governors of the Low Countries from 1598 to 1633, the archdukes Albert and Isabella.⁵

Scholarly interest in beguinages and their history resulted in a series of publications which tried to unravel the questions of the beguinages' origins, etymology, and foundations. This movement was not only an intellectual quest of historiographers, but was also related to liturgical and musical practice. The present article explores this relationship: it

³ However, the sources do not indicate whether this is the music that was actually sung during the Brussels celebration of December 20, 1626.

⁴ Thus far, only one office can be related to the early beguine culture, the office of Mary of Nivelles (or Mary of Oignies), surviving in only one manuscript, from the Cistercian abbey of Villers (Brussels, Royal Library, Ms. II 1658) that contains Mary's office and that of the Cistercian lay brother Arnulph Cornibout. A study of these offices is in preparation by the author; see also Misonne D., "Office liturgique neumé de la bienheureuse Marie d'Oignies à l'abbaye de Villers au XIII^e siècle", in Album J. Balon (Namur: 1968) 171–189. Furthermore, there are indications that an office existed for the Southern French beguine, Douceline de Digne, who lived in Roubault near Marseille; for further references, see Mannaerts P., "Lifting the Veil: Musical Beguinage Sources in a European Context", in Mannaerts P. (ed.), Beghinae in Cantu Instructae: Musical Patrimony in Flemish Beguinages (Middle Ages–Late 18th C), Epitome Musical (Turnhout: 2009) 245–246.

⁵ Arblaster P., "The Archdukes and the Northern Counter-Reformation", in Thomas W. – Duerloo L. (eds.), *Albrecht & Isabella 1598–1621* (Turnhout: 1998) 87–92.

investigates how traditions of the medieval promotion of a saint were taken up in seventeenth-century scholarly discourse and found their way into artistic and musical production; how, conversely, this musical production left its traces in scholarly writings of the seventeenth century; and how the Begga offices of the seventeenth century are composed and whether they show actual medieval characteristics.

The analysis of the place and use of office chants in honor of Begga in the scholarly discussion on the origin and foundation of the beguine movement, here called the 'foundation polemic', will demonstrate that the chant texts were considered legitimate source material in a historical argument. Furthermore, the confrontation of the writings of the polemic with the preserved sources from a number of beguinages will reveal that the office used and referred to in the polemic differs almost entirely from the office found in the beguinage sources. I shall argue that this is most likely due to the many references to royalty and power in the first office. Consequently, an older, late medieval tradition considering Begga as an ancestor of the Carolingians and thus of the dukes of Brabant was used as a legitimation of a newer, early modern one, which saw Begga as the foundress of the beguinages. This interplay of medieval and early modern traditions shows that the historiae or liturgical offices in honour of Begga, devotional and artistic phenomena at the same time, play multiple roles: they serve as source material for historical argumentation as well as artistic instruments in the promotion of the saint and those groups in society that claim Begga as an ancestor or foundress, such as the beguines and the dukes of Brabant.

Beguinages' Institutional Historiography'

In order to grasp something of the context in which both the promotion of Begga and the interest in beguinages took place, it is important to sketch briefly how beguinages were perceived in the early seventeenth century, why their organization was not considered self-evident, and how this led scholars to delve into the origins and etymology of the beguinages. The scholars wishing to tackle the history of the beguines and their communities in the Low Countries saw themselves confronted with an arduous task, because the beguines most likely originated as a spontaneous beguine movement in the diocese

of Liège, and only gradually organized themselves in convents and in court beguinages.⁶ This makes the origins of the beguine movement difficult to grasp, let alone to discuss them in an 'institutional history'. The seventeenth-century clergy and scholars responded in different ways to the complex phenomenon of the beguines' communities which were not entirely compatible with the established view of institutions, such as monasteries and convents of other religious orders. Indeed, beguinages escape a comfortable classification as a classical church institution. As Walter Simons concludes in his standard work *Cities of Ladies*, medieval beguinages were characterized by

[...] a lack of overarching governmental structures, a low level of internal hierarchy, a tendency toward the sacralization of routine work, the use of dance and ecstacy in worship, and an emphasis on the continuity between female existence before and after entrance into the community. Beguines never formed a centralized religious order or adopted a single rule. Although beguinages had internal systems of ranking, all functions within the community, including that of grand mistress, were held for a specific time only and rotated among senior members.⁷

Irregular characteristics of the beguine communities further included the vows they took, or rather their uncommon dealing with these vows. Beguines made a vow of obedience to the grand mistress, and a vow of chastity, but did not take a vow of poverty. Furthermore, and in contrast to monastic communities, these vows were not eternal, but applied only for the time they would remain in the beguinage; beguines were free to leave at any time (e.g. for marriage). Because of the absence of a vow of poverty, beguines were allowed to possess their own houses, and to own books and other objects, which they could take with them when they left.⁸

⁶ On the medieval beguinages, the principal work is Simons W., Cities of Ladies. Beguine Communities in the Medieval Low Countries, 1200–1565 (Philadelphia: 2003). An older work, but with many valuable references, is Philippen, De begijnhoven; the best-known older study in English is McDonnell E., The Beguines and Beghards in Medieval Culture: With Special Emphasis on the Belgian Scene (New Brunswick: 1954). On post-medieval beguine culture, see Trooskens M. (ed.), Begijnen en begijnhoven (Brussels: 1994).

Simons, Cities of Ladies 143.

⁸ These characteristics have led historians not only to observe parallels between beguines and canonesses, but also to hypothesize about possible connections between them; for an evaluation of these views, see Ziegler J.E., "Secular Canonesses as Antecedent of the Beguines in the Low Countries: An Introduction to Some Older Views", Studies in Medieval and Renaissance History 13 (1992) 117–135.

In the early modern period, beguinages were increasingly treated as regular ecclesiastical institutions. In a number of dioceses, for example, the bishops responsible provided uniform statutes for all beguinages. One of the earliest examples are the statutes issued by the archbishop of Mechelen, Johannes Hauchinus, on March 22, 1588. As the sources show, Hauchinus and his successors also regularly held visitations in the beguinages. As a result, one of Hauchinus's successors, the archbishop d'Alsace, could mention in his report to the Pope of 1730 that the beguinages of his archdiocese adhered strictly to the statutes and, consequently, were very useful as a link between the religious state and the lay world and a benefit to the church and the community.

That the beguines were progressively viewed as a religious 'order' is also apparent from the studies on their origins (cf. infra) and from their inclusion in scholarly publications providing an overview of the scope of existing orders, i.e. in relation to their garbs and vestments, as in Adriaan Schoonebeek's *Nette afbeeldingen der eygene dragten van alle geestelijke vrouwen en nonnenorders, nevens een korte aantekening van haar begin, voortgang en bevestiging* (Precise illustrations of all the particular costumes of spiritual women and nuns' orders, followed by a short notice of their beginning, growth, and establishment), published in Amsterdam in 1691, in which the beguines of Amsterdam and Antwerp are depicted.¹²

Etymology

Nevertheless, the beguinages' later history and organization did not help seventeenth-century scholars much in clarifying the nebulous origins of the beguine movement. Therefore, they turned to the etymology of the word 'beguina'. Like the early history of the beguinages, the etymology of 'beguina' remained unclear for centuries. Only in 1970 did Maurits Gysseling show convincingly that the word 'beguina' derives

⁹ See Van de Wiel C., "De begijnhoven en de vrouwelijke kloostergemeenschappen in het aartsbisdom Mechelen (1716–1801)", *Ons Geestelijk Erf* 44, 2 (1970) 142–212. The statutes are published in Philippen, *De begijnhoven* 315–328.

Van de Wiel, "De begijnhoven" 142–212.

¹¹ Ibid. 151.

¹² Schoonebeek Adriaan, Nette afbeeldingen der eygene dragten van alle geestelijke vrouwen en nonnenorders, nevens een korte aantekening van haar begin, voortgang en bevestiging (Amsterdam, Adriaan Schoonebeek: 1691).

from the stem 'begg-', referring to 'mumbling, speaking unclearly', and hence in a secondary sense meaning 'hypocritical, sanctimonious'. The word thus reflects the skepticism with which the beguines and their way of life met in the early decades of their existence.¹³

From the mid-thirteenth century onwards, the unknown etymology and the negative connotations of the word 'beguina' therefore gave rise to several speculative explanations. These alternative hypotheses are important for the 'institutional' historiography of the beguinages, because many of them relate to an alleged founder or foundress of the beguine way of life. Three of these were particularly often referred to in later debates. One of the most fanciful that circulated from the fifteenth century onwards was the legend of the foundation of the first beguinage by a learned doctor who became bishop of Prague, and founded a city for one hundred beguines. He named them after the queen and her two daughters, by putting together the first syllables of their names, Beatrix, Ghyselgundis, and Nazarena, respectively.

A more historically informed hypothesis was that the beguines were named after Lambert le Bègue ('Lambert li Beges' in Walloon), a charismatic priest and preacher who indeed played an important part in the early beguine movement, but cannot be considered its founder. ¹⁶ This theory was one of the earliest to emerge, and is documented from the 1240s on. ¹⁷

A third hypothesis, and the principal competitor of the preceding, is that 'beguina' derives from Begga, the Merovingian saint, sister of

¹³ Gysseling M., "De herkomst van het woord begijn", *Heenkundig nieuws* 13 (1985) 9–12; cf. also Philippen, *De begijnhoven* 19–20; Simons, *Cities of Ladies* 122; Simons W., "Beguines, Liturgy and Music in the Middle Ages: An Exploration", in Mannaerts P. (ed.), *Beghinae in Cantu Instructae: Musical Patrimony from Flemish Beguinages (Middle Ages–Late 18th Century), Epitome Musical* (Turnhout: 2009) 15–25.

¹⁴ For the etymology of 'beguine', see Philippen, *De begijnhoven* 16–39; McDonnell, *The Beguines and Beghards* 430–438; Simons, *Cities of Ladies* 121–123.

¹⁵ Ibid. 142; Philippen, *De begijnhoven* 18; both refer to Lecoutere C., "Eene legende over den oorsprong der begijnen", *Verslagen en Mededeelingen der Koninklijke Vlaamsche Academie* (1907) 96–134. The legend is also found on a single printed leaf, probably from the sixteenth century, accompanied by an illustration, kept in the Royal Library of Brussels (*Hier nae volcht den oorspronck hoe die beghijnen yerstwerf opghecomen zijn inder heyligher kercken*, LP 3204 C). As the glue at the back of the print suggests, the leaf may have been a poster glued on a board, for instance at the entrance of a beguinage church.

¹⁶ On Lambert le Bègue, see McDonnell, *The Beguines and Beghards* 71–77; Simons, *Cities of Ladies* 24–34.

¹⁷ With Giles of Orval as one of its earliest defenders: *Gesta episcoporum Leodiensium*; cf. ibid. 32.

St. Gertrude, daughter of Pippin of Landen and thus an ancestor of the Carolingian rulers. After the decease of her husband Ansegisel, Begga undertook a pilgrimage to Rome, where she visited seven of the most important churches. Upon her return, Begga, like her sister Gertrude, founded her own convent at Andenne, which contained seven chapels or churches. She died on December 17, 1693, and was buried in the convent. Begga's veneration as the foundress of Andenne goes back at least to the eleventh century, and the first references to the composition of chants in her honor date from the middle of the twelfth. Like Lambert le Bègue, Begga was considered one of the possible founders of the beguine movement; but although Begga was known as a saint and venerated in several other contexts as well, the connection with the beguines seems to have been made only from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries onwards.

The Foundation Polemic

Nowhere is the interrelation of etymology and foundation of the beguine movement clearer than in the search of seventeenth-century scholars for the beguinages' origins and foundation, a search that led to a real 'foundation polemic' between 1628 and 1631. The main contributors in the discussion were three canons and a Carmelite from Antwerp, and a Benedictine abbot and a university professor from Leuven; the central debate focused on whether Begga or Lambert le Bègue was the founder of the beguinages (a summary of authors and titles is given in Table 1 on p. 227).²⁰

The different viewpoints of the polemic are documented several decades before 1628. Archbishop Hauchinus was probably the first to derive 'beguina' from 'Begga', in the preamble to his statutes of 1588.²¹ One of the first defenders of Lambert le Bègue was Aubert Mireaus, canon and later dean of the Antwerp cathedral, vicar general of the diocese of Antwerp, and almoner and librarian of archduke Albert

¹⁸ The principal study of the convent of Andenne is Misson [P.], *Le chapitre noble de sainte-Begge à Andenne* (repr. Brussels: 1999; orig. ed. Brussels: 1889).

¹⁹ Mannaerts, "Authenticity and Invention" 73–76.

²⁰ On the foundation polemic, see Philippen, *De begijnhoven* 1–15; McDonnell, *The Beguines and Beghards* 430–431; Trooskens, *Begijnen en begijnhoven* 34–36.

Quoted in Elias of St. Theresia, Het Gheestelyck Palays der Beggijnhoven 47–49.

of Austria.²² A small treatise, dedicated to his sister Catherine, who became a beguine in Brussels, was published by Plantin in 1602.²³

The real polemic, however, only came to full expansion in the years 1628–1631. Miraeus was joined in his position by another canon of Antwerp cathedral, Petrus Coens, who wrote two treatises in 1628 and 1629 which contain the most critical argumentation of the entire polemic, in favour of Lambert le Bègue. Coens's second treatise was a response to two writings, by Zeger van Hontsum, a canon, and Elias of St. Theresia (Joannes Baptista Wils), a Discalced Carmelite. Together with Joseph Geldolph Van Ryckel van Oorbeeck, the abbot of the abbey of St. Gertrude in Leuven who dedicated his work to the archduchess Isabella Clara Eugenia, and the university professor Erycius Puteanus, these authors defended the primacy of Begga as the foundress of the beguine movement. Puteanus's strongest arguments relied on three charters of the beguinage of Vilvoorde, which predated the activities of Lambert le Bègue. 24 As we can judge from later scholarly and artistic production, the theory of Begga as the foundress seems to have dominated until the 1840s at least.²⁵

The Liturgical Office of Begga in the Polemic

The publications from the foundation polemic are interesting because they document how the emerging scholarly approach of the past was in search of a balance between the collecting of relevant sources, their critical analysis, and respect for received convictions and traditions. In this respect, it is fascinating to note that several of the authors produced arguments based on a form of oral tradition. The Discalced

²² De Ridder B.-C., *Aubert le Mire, sa vie, ses écrits*, Mémoires couronnés et mémoires des savants étrangers publiés par l'Académie royale des sciences, des lettres et des beaux-arts de Belgique 31 (Brussels: 1863).

²³ Cf. also ibid. 44–45.

²⁴ These charters were proven to be forgeries by Hallmann, *Die Geschichte des Ursprungs der Belgischen Beghinen*. Cf. also Philippen, *De begijnhoven* 4, and 425–432 for an edition of the charters.

²⁵ For the devotional promotion of Begga in the beguinage of Mechelen, see Eck X. van, "Between Restraint and Excess: The Decoration of the Church of the Great Beguinage at Mechelen in the Seventeenth Century", *Simiolus. Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art* 28 (2000–2001) 129–162. In 1843, Hallmann concluded that the beguines were founded by Lambert le Bègue, and that their name was derived from Lambert's; cf. Hallmann, *Die Geschichte des Ursprungs der Belgischen Beghinen*.

Table 1. Participants in the foundation polemic, [1588-]1628-1631

In defense of Lambert le Bègue

In defense of Begga

Aubertus Miraeus, Origo Beginarum virginum in Belgio hodieque frequentium (Antwerp, s.n.: 1602); reprinted in Miraeus's Chronicon Cisterciensis ordinis (Cologne, Bernhard Walter: 1614)

Petrus Coens, Disputatio historica et brevis disquisitio, an beghinae nomen, institutum et originem habeant a Sancta Begga, Brabantiae Ducissa (Antwerp, s.n.: 1628)

Petrus Coens, Disquisitio historica de origine Beghinarum et Beghinagiorum Belgii cum adjunctis notis, quibus declaratio veridica quod begginae nomen, institutum et originem habeant a S. Begga Brabantiae Ducissa, illustratur (Liège, Christianus Ouwerx jr.: 1629)

Joannes Hauchinus, Preamble to the statutes of the beguinages in the archdiocese of Mechelen (Mechelen: 1588)²⁶

Zegher van Hontsum, Declaratio veredica quod Begginae nomen, institutum et originem habeant a S. Begga Brabantiae ducissa ac brevis simul refutatio Historicae disputationis Petri Coens (Antwerp, Hieronymus Verdussen: 1628)

Elias of St. Theresia [Joannes Baptista Wils], Het Gheestelyck Palays der Beggijnhoven in drij boecken verdeylt; waarvan het eerste bewijst S. Begga waerachtelijck der Beggijnen fondatersse te zijn (Antwerp, Hieronymus Verdussen: 1628)

Erycius Puteanus, De Begginarum apud Belgas instituto ac nomine suffragium quo controversia recens excitata sopitur (Leuven, Cornelius Coenestenius: 1630)

Elias of St. Theresia [Joannes Baptista Wils], Het gheestelyck palays der beggyn-hoven II, Het leven van Sinte Begga Hertoghinne van Brabant (Antwerp, Hieronymus Verdussen: 1631)

Joseph Geldolph Van Ryckel van Oorbeeck, Vita S. Beggae, Ducissae Brabantiae Andetennensium, Begginarum, et Beggardorum Fundatricis: vetus, hactenus non edita, et commentario illustrata. Adjuncta est Historia Begginasiorum Belgii (Leuven, Cornelius Coenestenius: 1631)

²⁶ Published in Philippen, *De begijnhoven* 315–328; see Van de Wiel, "De begijnhoven" 153, note 2 for manuscript references.

Carmelite Elias of St. Theresia interviewed beguines in several beguinages and asked them about the antiquity of the veneration of Begga as a patron saint; these interviews were written down and dated by a sworn notary, who is always identified. On May 22, 1628, Elias interviewed six beguines from the beguinage of Antwerp. As written down by the notary, Herman Duys from Antwerp, Catharina de la Hove, Maria Carpereaulx, and Agneete Bernaerts testified that they had always heard that the beguinages were named after Begga. To this, Jacobmijne de Vison, Elisabeth Van Roy, and Elisabeth Merx added that the derivation from Lambert le Bègue was unknown to them. Similar interviews were recorded with the three grand mistresses of the beguinage of Leuven on April 25, and with four beguines in Brussels, including Joanna van Oudenhaghen, the grand mistress, on April 4, 1628. On account of their age (between 42 and 84) and years as a beguine (from 21 to 67), always explicitly mentioned, these beguines are presented as authoritative witnesses of the devotional and liturgical beguinage practices of the past decades.²⁷

More pertinent to the liturgical cult of Begga is the presence of the liturgical offices for Begga in the publications of the foundation polemic. These offices were intended for the celebration of the feast of Begga on December 17, and for the feast of her Translation on July 7. Selections from the chant texts, or sometimes the complete office, are appended as justificatory material, and some even incorporate references to specific chants in their arguments. Thus, apart from the oral testimonies referred to earlier, and the more commonly expected sources such as historical documents and narrative sources such as the Vita, the liturgical offices in honor of Begga were equally considered legitimate source material, not only as evidence documenting the (liturgical) veneration of the saint, but also as historical documents allowing factual conclusions. For that reason, it is significant to see how the office texts were put to use by early modern historiographers – a practice not commonly noticed by musicologists – and to which of the existing offices they referred. Furthermore, as will become clear in the following paragraphs, the confrontation with the extant liturgical and musical sources for the office of Begga sheds further light on extant liturgical practices and on the process of selection that took place but cannot readily be seen in the foundation polemic itself.

²⁷ Elias of St. Theresia, Het Gheestelyck Palays der Beggijnhoven 55-60, 194-197.

Two authors, Elias of St. Theresia and Petrus Coens, quote a number of chants as historical documents, attesting to the importance of Begga as the foundress of the beguines. In Chapter 13 of the first book of his *Gheestelijck Palays der Beggijn-hoven*, published in 1628, Elias of St. Theresia quotes two antiphons, "Caro eius vel anima" and "Nomen Dei laudabile", from the office of Andenne (cf. infra), and attempts to show that the antiphon texts support his claim that Begga was responsible for founding a movement which numbered among its ranks both female and male followers, i.e. beguines and beghards:

Let us now come to the second attestation which clearly attests that St Begga not only founded a convent, but several communities populated by many virgins and men; because several important men of the Holy Church, such as bishops and similar prelates, have confirmed that the proper office of St Begga has been sung in the church of Andenne from times immemorial. In this office, our proposition is confirmed by the third antiphon of Lauds [...]: 'Thus, as her flesh or soul thirsted for heavenly goods, she gathered many crowds of virgins for the Lord' and, for the male communities, in the second antiphon of Vespers [...]: 'The Name of the Lord is honourable, and through word and works, it made her a happy mother of many sons'.²⁸

Elias's line of thought is not exactly an example of irrefutible and critical historiography, and this made his position vulnerable. The quoted passage is an attack on the critical reading of the antiphon texts published *privatim* by Petrus Coens earlier that year.²⁹ Coens clearly was

²⁹ Coens Petrus, Disquisitio historica de origine Beghinarum et Beghinagiorum Belgii cum adjunctis notis, quibus declaratio veridica quod begginae nomen, institutum et originem habeant a S. Begga Brabantiae Ducissa, illustratur (Liège, Christianus Ouwerx jr.: 1629) 3, makes this chronology clear.

²⁸ Ibid. 143: 'Nu laet ons tot de tweede attestatie comen de welcke van outs opentlijck bevesticht dat S. Begga niet een Clooster alleen en heeft ghesticht, maer diversche vergaderinghen van overvloedigher scharen der Maechden ende mans persoonen; want dusdanich oock toeghestaen ende bevesticht hebben diversche publicque mannen der heyligher Kercken, als zijn Bisschoppen ende dierghelijcke gheestelijcke Prelaten, die over soo langhe jaren datmen gheen memorie ghevinden en can wanneert eerst beghonst is, continuelijck inde Kerk van Andijn het eygen officie van de H. Beggga gheconsenteert hebben ghesonghen te worden, waer in onder meer andere bevestinghen van ons propost staet ad Laudes voor de derde Antiphone 'Caro eius vel anima, dum sitiret caelestia/ Deo collegit plurima, virginitatis agmina', dat is te segghen: 'Alsoo haer vleesch oft siele, dorsten hemelsche waren, heeft sy aen Godt vergadert, veel Maechdelijke scharen' ende wederom vande vergaderinghe der mans ad vesperas in de tweede Antiphone, 'Nomen Dei laudabile, qui hanc verbo et opere,/ fecit esse plurimorum, matrem laetam filiorum', 'lofbaar is Godts naem, die haer door woort ende werck/ bly moeder heeft gemaeckt, van veele sonen sterck' (abbreviations in the Dutch text resolved, typographical errors corrected).

not persuaded by Elias's argument, because he repeats his own reading in his second book, published in 1629. Quoting the same antiphons, Coens asserts that these do not refer to beguines and beghards. Instead, he reads them as referring to the canons and canonesses of the convent of Andenne, founded by Begga, and supports his hypothesis with the chapter acts of the convent:

From the office of St Begga: 'The Name of the Lord [...]', and 'Thus, as her flesh [...]'. I wonder what this proves for the beguines? St Begga can, in similar verse, truthfully be called 'the happy mother of many sons' and be said 'to have gathered many crowds of virgins for the Lord', even when only thirty virgins and ten canons were in this community, such as founded by her in the chapter acts discussed earlier. This is the real meaning of what can be read in the manuscript *vita* of St Begga: 'choirs [groups] of both sexes were called together', and 'immediately, a group consisting of both sexes, was present'.³⁰

The complete text of the office from which these antiphons derive is included at the end of Joseph Geldolph Van Ryckel's *Vita S. Beggae*, which, against Coens, defends Begga as the foundress of the beguine and the beghard movement.³¹ Remarkably, almost six hundred pages earlier in his book, Van Ryckel publishes excerpts from a different office from the diocese of Namur.

The apparent existence of several offices raises questions about the differences in composition and use of these offices. As a survey of the extant source material related to the (musical) veneration of Begga has shown, at least three offices in honor of Begga circulated during the seventeenth century. Elsewhere, I have offered an overview of the extant sources for text and music of the liturgical office of Begga; for convenience's sake, these were labeled the offices of Namur, Andenne,

³⁰ Coens Petrus, Disputatio historica et brevis disquisitio, an beghinae nomen, institutum et originem habeant a Sancta Begga, Brabantiae Ducissa (Antwerp, s.n.: 1628) §32 (no pagination): 'Ex officio S. Beggae: 'Nomen Dei laudabile [...]', item 'Caro eius vel anima [...]'. Quid quaeso haec pro Beghinis? S. Begga, praesertim in similibus Rhytmicis, vere dici potest 'Laeta mater plurimorum filiorum', et 'Deo collegisse plurima virginitatis agmina', etiamsi tantum 30 virgines et 10 canonici fuissent in suo collegio, quomodo S. Beggam illud fundasse in acta Capitulari, de qua sup. n° 7 Andenenses testatur. Quomodo etiam verum est illud ex manuscripta vita S. Beggae productum'. The passage is reprinted in Coens, Disquisitio historica 226-227.

³¹ Van Ryckel van Oorbeeck Josephus Geldolphus, Vita S. Beggae, Ducissae Brabantiae Andetennensium, Begginarum, et Beggardorum Fundatricis: vetus, hactenus non edita, et commentario illustrata. Adjuncta est Historia Begginasiorum Belgii (Leuven, Cornelius Coenestenius: 1631) 702–713.

and Utrecht.³² No chant sources survive for the Namur office, but since the texts rely heavily on other chants from the Common of saints, it cannot be considered a proper office for Begga.³³

The office of Andenne was sung at the convent founded by Begga at Andenne; its earliest musical source dates from 1669.³⁴ Even though there is no evidence to suggest that the Andenne office for Begga was actually sung in the beguinages, because the only surviving musical manuscripts come from the convent of Andenne, it is clear from the polemic publications that its texts were known to the men closely involved with the history (and in some cases, with the pastoral care) of the beguinages, and possibly also to the beguines themselves.

The office of Utrecht is the only office of which musical sources exist that originated in beguinages, those of Turnhout and Antwerp. The office in these manuscripts is incomplete, however, lacking music for the first and second Nocturn of Matins. The surviving music of the Utrecht office consists of an invitatory antiphon for Matins, antiphons and responsories for the third Nocturn of Matins, antiphons for Lauds, two Magnificat antiphons for first and second Vespers, and two office hymns (see Table 2 in the Appendix, p. 241-243). It is found in a number of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century sources, the earliest of which dates from 1663. The text of the complete office, however, was printed only ten years after the polemic, in 1640, in a volume with local offices for the archdiocese of Utrecht, entitled Officia Sanctorum Archiepiscopatus Ultrajectensis, et Episcopatuum Suffraganeorum Harlemensis, Daventriensis, Leovardiensis, Groeningensis et Middelburgensis, Digesta ad normam Breviarii Romani and printed by Johannes Kinckius (Cologne, Kinckius: 1640).35 In this office, Begga is explicitly venerated as the patroness of the beguines.

The offices of Utrecht and Andenne share a small number of texts, which may indicate the use of a common basis or model, but at the

³² Mannaerts P., "Authenticity and Invention: Composition, Distribution and Origin of the Offices for St. Begga", in Mannaerts P. (ed.), *Beghinae in Cantu Instructae: Musical Patrimony in Flemish Beguinages (Middle Ages–Late 18th C)*, *Epitome Musical* (Turnhout: 2009) 51–76.

³³ Only one responsory text, *Regnum mundi*, had been set to music at the beguinage of Leuven; but this is music for two voices and organ accompaniment, not chant; cf. Mannaerts, "Authenticity and invention" 62.

³⁴ Brussels, Royal Library, Ms. II 3316.

³⁵ I thank W.M.J. Boumans (Utrecht University Library) for providing photographs of the Begga office in the edition of 1640.

same time the variants are too numerous to speak of identical texts (see Table 3 in the Appendix, p. 244–245, for a comparison of these related texts). A comparison of the music of the related responsory (Utrecht R3 and Andenne R5) and antiphons (Utrecht Matins A1–4 and Andenne Lauds A1–3 and 5) is not possible, however, since only the Andenne office survives with music. Only the hymn "Laude solemni modulemur" can be compared in musical sources of both offices. The two versions are in the second mode, but again there are important textual variants, and the melodies differ to the extent that one can clearly distinguish two different melodies. Indeed, in Bruno Stäblein's reference work on hymns, these second-mode melodies appear under two different numbers.³⁶

It is unknown how the authors of the foundation polemic obtained their source material, but it seems plausible that the first location where sources would be sought was the institution where Begga's cult originated, the convent in Andenne. Apart from the *vita*, the Andenne office in honor of Begga could be found there. That authors effectively obtained their source material directly or indirectly from Andenne is demonstrated by the source indicated in Joseph Geldolph Van Ryckel's transcription of the Andenne office, published in his book of 1631: 'the office of the blessed Begga, foundress of the church of Andenne and its seven churches, taken from an old manuscript from the aforementioned church of Andenne'.³⁷

Still, it remains remarkable that in their attempt to procure authoritative source material the authors of the polemic seem to have foregone the sources at hand in the beguinages themselves. As the extant sources demonstrate, the chants of the Utrecht office for Begga were certainly sung in the beguinages of Antwerp and Turnhout, and probably in others as well. Thus, the confrontation of the musical sources with the publications of the foundation polemic leads to the paradoxical conclusion that the liturgical office to which scholars referred differed almost completely from the office that was actually performed in beguinages, as is attested by musical sources.

³⁶ The hymn in the Andenne office corresponds to Stäblein's no. 613, whereas that in the Utrecht office uses melody no. 151; cf. Stäblein B., *Hymnen I. Die mittelalterlichen Hymnenmelodien des Abendlandes*, Monumenta Monodica Medii Aevi 1 (Kassel: 1995).

³⁷ Van Ryckel van Oorbeeck, *Vita S. Beggae* 702: 'Officium Beatae Beggae Andanensis Ecclesiae & septem ejus Ecclesiarum fundatricis. Exceptum ex antiquo libro manuscripto, dictae Ecclesiae Andanensis'.

The Utrecht Office

Beside the obvious element of authority of the Andenne office, an analysis of the text and music of the Utrecht office and a summary comparison with that from Andenne may further clarify the reasons for authors to prefer the Andenne office as a source for the arguments in the polemic.

The chant texts of the Utrecht office of Begga are not always easy to relate to text sources, because a number of them are quite general and unspecific. Some chant texts, such as the invitatory antiphon, seem to be based on other texts used for other female saints, such as Mary Magdalen, Anne or Catherine, and still others were set to Biblical texts from the Song of Songs, and from the books of Wisdom and Jesus Sirach (or Ecclesiasticus).

However, when the text of the first six responsories from the first and second Nocturns of Matins are compared to the contents of the *Vita Beggae*, a fairly clear pattern emerges.³⁸ Indeed, the responsories clearly follow the order of events followed in Chapters 2 to 7 of the *Vita (Bibliotheca Hagiographica Latina [BHL]*³⁹ 1083):

R	Incipit	Vita Chapter (BHL 1083)
R1	Iuncta thoro Begga mater	2-3
R2	Persecutor dum parentem	4
R3	Iam soluta lege viri	5
R4	Cor ad Christum anhelabat	6
R5	Ad exemplar Christi matris	6
R6	Moritura mater pia	7

The Utrecht office has only three proper lessons, those of the second Nocturn. When the same comparison is made, it becomes clear that these lessons (4, 5 and 6) are taken from Chapters 8 to 10 of the *Vita* as it was published by Van Ryckel:

³⁸ In the third Nocturn, the lessons are replaced by a sermon on the gospel, Officia Sanctorum Archiepiscopatus Ultrajectensis, et Episcopatuum Suffraganeorum Harlemensis, Daventriensis, Leovardiensis, Groeningensis et Middelburgensis, Digesta ad normam Breviarii Romani (Cologne, Johannes Kinckius: 1640) xxix.

³⁹ Bibliotheca latina hagiographica antiquae et mediae aetatis, Subsidia hagiographica 6 and 70 (Brussels: 1949 and 1986).

L	Incipit	Vita Chapter	BHL
	Cum sancta Begga	8	1084
L5	Singularia autem rei	8	
L6	Deus autem sanctitatem	9 + 10	1085

Even though a critical edition or other research on the manuscript tradition of the *Vita* of Begga does not exist, it is clear from existing literature and from the *Bibliotheca Hagiographica Latina* that the Chapters 1 to 7 constitute the *Vita Beggae* proper as it is found in its oldest source, the Lobbes Lectionary. The Chapters 8 to 10, however, are not found in this source, but form the *Miracula (Bibliotheca Hagiographica Latina* 1084–1085), which are found together in the first part of the famous *Hagiologium Brabantinorum*, copied by the canon Johannes Gielemans of the Rooklooster (near Brussels) between 1476 and 1484. The content of the chant texts thus returns to the earliest *Vita*, whereas the lessons were set to a younger text. Taken as a whole, the office published in the *Officia sanctorum Archiepiscopatus Ultrajectensis* could date from the late fifteenth century or later.

There are several indications to support this dating. First of all, in the chant texts no trace of *verbatim* copying can be found: the *Vita* is written in prose, whereas the chant texts are in verse. The selected episodes were adapted to the strict mould of an extremely regular metrical and rhyme pattern (mostly 'aaab', in which the 'a'-verses correspond with eight syllables, and the 'b'-verses with seven), which is only abandoned at Lauds. Thus, while the chant texts follow the course of the main episodes of the eleventh-century *vita* and of the miracle stories from a later date, there is some distance between the prose of the *vita* and the verse phrasing of the office.

Furthermore, the contents of the texts seem to have been selected in such a way as to fit beguine devotion. The sixth responsory verse of Matins explicitly mentions the Sacrament,⁴² especially popular in

⁴⁰ Brussels, Royal Library, Ms. 18018.

⁴¹ Poncelet A., "De codicibus hagiographicis Iohannis Gielemans, canonici regularis in Rubea Vallis prope Bruxellas", *Analecta Bollandiana* 14 (1895) 5–88. A copy made by the Bollandists is Brussels, Royal Library, Ms. 8976–8978. Brussels, Royal Library, Ms. 3391–99 has the *vita* until Chapter 9 (*Miracula*, *Bibliotheca Hagiographica Latina* 1084).

⁴² 'Vocans turmas filiarum, cibum petit animarum, Sacramentum Christi charum, ultimum viaticum'.

beguine devotion since it emerged in the thirteenth century.⁴³ Admittedly, the Sacrament is also mentioned in Chapter 7 of the *Vita Beggae*, but given the beguines' attested preoccupation with the Eucharist, its presence in the Utrecht office seems to correspond particularly well to the popularity of sacramental devotion in beguinages. In this respect, the Utrecht office differs markedly from the office from Andenne, where no references to the Sacrament of the Eucharist, to Corpus Christi or the Blood of Christ can be found at all. Moreover, in four of the chants, Begga is explicitly referred to as the foundress of the beguines,⁴⁴ which further broadens the gap between *Vita* and office, because the beguines are completely absent from the *Vita*.

Given the time span of only nine years between Van Ryckel's publication of the *Vita* (1631), and that of the *Officia sanctorum* (1640), it is even likely that the lessons published in the *Officia sanctorum* were directly based on Van Ryckel's edition. Indeed, while the fourth and sixth lessons paraphrase their source rather loosely, the fifth lesson contains a long *verbatim* quotation from Van Ryckel's Chapter 8.

The music of the Utrecht office shows a similar combination of possibly medieval and later characteristics. From the surviving chants it appears that the procedure known as modal ordering, which was increasingly applied from the tenth century on, and became a standard feature of saints' offices from the twelfth century onwards, was not used in the Utrecht office. Instead, in the remaining chants the first and fourth maneria strongly predominate: of the eighteen chants, only four are not in the protus (first or second mode) or tetrardus (seventh or eighth mode) maneria. Similarly, the two responsory verses that survive use the standard verse tones of the first and seventh modes, a practice that gradually disappeared in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. While it

⁴³ See Mens A., "De vereering van de H. Eucharistie bij onze vroegste begijnen", in Axters S. (ed.), *Studia eucharistica DCCⁱ anni a condito festo sanctissimi Corporis Christi* 1246–1946 (Antwerp: 1946) 157–186.

⁴⁴ Magnificat antiphon of First Vespers: 'O fundatrix Begginarum, gregem tuum dirige; in odorem unguentorum Christi fac nos currere'; fourth responsory verse: 'Ad salutem animarum, Jesu Christi devotarum, piam vitam Begginarum postmodum instituit'; second antiphon of Lauds: 'O sancta mater Begga, quam pulcra es, et quam decora in Begginali familia'; Magnificat antiphon of Second Vespers: 'Ave mater speciosa, clarior sideribus; cujus vultum ac decorem concupivit Dominus: sancta Begga Begginarum mater dives meritis, funde preces redemptoris pro tuis supplicibus' (Officia Sanctorum Archiepiscopatus Ultrajectensis xxv, xxvij, xxix, xxx).

⁴⁵ On the other hand, it is used with remarkable regularity in the Andenne office.

is attractive to interpret this as an archaism, caution is due in drawing conclusions from the music of the Utrecht office as a whole, since the music has actually been preserved for only about two thirds of the office. The music of the two first Nocturns of Matins is missing, leaving only two out of eight original responsory verses to have survived. In addition, the late date of the sources at hand – the earliest musical source is from 1663 – does not necessarily support an early origin of the Utrecht office.

It is much more likely, then, that the chant melodies were amalgamated from existing Marian or common chants, perhaps with a view to realize a certain modal homogeneity. An analysis of the music of the Utrecht office shows that this is indeed the case. A considerable portion of the chants can be traced back to pre-existing material, mainly taken from repertory intended for the celebration of female saints. This repertory is relatively flexible, in that its assignment to specific feast days may vary between regions, institutions, and sources. The chants serving as a basis for the Begga office most likely belonged to one or a few categories (most likely that of the Common of the Virgin Mary, the Common of Virgins, or the Common of non Virgins) which were used as a melodical resource. In more recent editions and reference books this repertory is assigned to saints such as Lucy, Agnes, or the Virgin Mary (Assumption, Conception, Nativity, Visitation), the Common of (non) Virgins, or the Common of the Virgin Mary.⁴⁶

The very limited amount of source material, the complete absence of medieval musical sources, the almost unexplored field of Begga's hagiography and veneration, and the possibility that text and music may have known a (partially) independent transmission make it difficult to see the results from the textual and musical analysis in a broader perspective, or to draw definite conclusions about dating and chronology.

The analysis seems to suggest, however, that despite the regularity of the larger part of its texts (the antiphons of Lauds excepted), the Utrecht office may have been too new for the authors of the foundation polemic, and that its music was to a too large extent based on secondary chants. Of the three offices, the Utrecht office was probably the office the beguines knew best – or possibly even the only office they knew at all. But to the beguinage scholars of the seventeenth

⁴⁶ For detailed references, see Table 2 in the Appendix.

century, the Andenne office must have had the advantage that, given its provenance from the convent where Begga's cult originated, it bore the stamp of authenticity.

The Andenne Office

A detailed analysis of the Andenne office cannot be undertaken within the limits of this contribution, but even a superficial glance at its text and music reveals the office's much greater musical unity and complete modal regularity (see also Table 4 in the Appendix, p. 245–246). The form of the responsories displays a similar regularity: in all responsories, elaborate series of notes on one syllable, called melismas, appear before the end of the repetendum, but without repeated patterns within the melismas. The uniformity extends to the responsory verses as well, which are all fully independent of the standard verse tones. The texts from the lessons (as published by Van Ryckel) are taken *verbatim* from Chapters 1 to 4 of the *Vita Beggae*. On the other hand, the office text does not have the formal unity of the Utrecht office, because it combines a number of versified antiphons (at First Vespers and Lauds) with prose texts that frequently use internal rhyme, but with changing numbers of syllables.

Apart from the office's provenance from Andenne, its frequent references to the concept of royalty must have appealed to the scholars referring to the office. This is clear from the chosen vocabulary and metaphors, in which words such as 'rex', 'regina', 'regnare', 'regnum' and related concepts such as 'dux', 'imperium', 'corona' and 'coronare' occur frequently. It is also apparent from the choice of episodes from Begga's life, such as the first lesson and the second antiphon of Matins, where Chapter 1 of the *Vita* mentions that she is the daughter of 'dux Pippinus', and the eighth responsory of Matins, which relates the miracle story (from Chapter 9 of Van Ryckel's edition, *Bibliotheca Hagiographica Latina* 1084) of an unidentified 'Rex Anglorum' who comes to Begga to have his daughter healed from her blindness. A similar reference to (noble or royal) family relations is the recurrence of the motif of marriage, visible in terminology such as 'sponsus', 'sponsa', 'nuptias', and 'coniunx'.

It is not difficult to see why these references to royalty and noble family bonds in the Andenne office had a special appeal for the propagators of Begga's veneration as the patron saint of the beguinages. All authors considered Begga as a former duchess of Brabant, as is testified by the title pages of the publications of the foundation polemic: Declaratio veredica quod Begginae nomen, institutum et originem habeant a S. Begga Brabantiae Ducissa (Van Hontsum: 1628), Vita S. Beggae, ducissae Brabantiae (Van Ryckel: 1631), Het gheestelyck palays der beggyn-hoven, II: Het leven van Sinte Begga Hertoghinne van Brabant (Elias of St. Theresia: 1631). Even Petrus Coens, one of the most ardent defenders of the priority of Lambert le Bègue, was convinced of Begga's status, as appears from the title page of his first book, the Disputatio historica et brevis disquisitio, an beghinae nomen, institutum en originem habeant a sancta Begga Brabantiae ducissa (1628).⁴⁷

As has been remarked by others, Begga was repeatedly recuperated as a saint: as a Merovingian ancestor she was one of the so-called pre-Carolingian⁴⁸ saints eagerly claimed by the Carolingians and those that aspired to be their heirs, such as the Habsburgs, or the dukes of Brabant.⁴⁹ Van Ryckel further stresses this connection through the inclusion of an engraving inscribed 'S. Begga. Filia ducis Brabantiae fundatrix Andetennae, Begginarum et beggardorum', which shows Begga protecting the beguines and the beghards under her cape, while holding the seven churches (representing the convent of Andenne), a book, and a crown in her hands.⁵⁰

The incorporation of Begga as a duchess of Brabant was not a new invention of the seventeenth century, but harks back to a practice established in the late Middle Ages. Johannes Gielemans' *Hagiologium Brabantinorum*, mentioned earlier, already ranks Begga among the saints considered as Brabantine between 1476 and 1484. The tradition of including Begga as a Brabantine saint and duchess further extends to the early decades of the fifteenth century: the *Cornicke van Brabant* (Chronicle of Brabant) written in 1415 by Hennen van Merchtenen, already mentions Begga as a member of the Pippinid dynasty, daughter of Pippin of Landen, the first duke of Brabant, and sister of saint

⁴⁷ Schoonebeek, *Nette afbeeldingen* 38 calls Begga 'a French princess'.

⁴⁸ Fattori M.T. "I santi antenati carolingi fra mito e storia: agiografie e genealogie come strumento di potere dinastico", *Studi medievali* 3rd series, 34 (1994) 487–561.

⁴⁹ Grieten S., "Een heilige verbeeld. Iconografie en ideologische recuperatie van de heilige Begga", *Jaarboek van het Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten Antwerpen* (1994) 89–183.

⁵⁰ Van Ryckel van Oorbeeck, Vita S. Beggae engraving opposite p. 3.

Gertrude of Nivelles.⁵¹ At the end of his Chronicle, Hennen resumes the virtues of the duchy by connecting each letter of 'Brabancia' to Brabant's qualities, rulers and saints.⁵² In this scheme, Hennen interprets the 'R' as an abbreviation of 'regalis':

This means a royal land, which certainly can be seen in Karloman's son, Pippin, a persecutor of the Saracenes and defender of Christianity. [...] His wife, Yduberga, bride of God, gave him two noble flowers: saint Begga and the pure virgin saint Gertrude of Nivelle. Therefore, Brabant may be called certainly a beatified, holy, royal land, because in it grew many fruits of Christianity.⁵³

Conclusion

The seventeenth century saw an important rise in the population and popularity of beguinages, and an efflorescence in their arts, architecture and music: music was played on organs in the beguinage churches, on harpsichords owned by beguines,⁵⁴ spiritual songs in the vernacular were sung in beguines' homes and convent houses, as well as chant in their churches.⁵⁵

⁵¹ I thank Wim van Anrooij (Leiden University) for this reference, and for providing me with several of his articles on the subject. The first edition of the chronicle is Hennen van Merchtenen, *Cornicke van Brabant (1414)*, ed. G. Gezelle (Ghent: 1896). Since Gezelle's edition, literary scholarship has reached an agreement on the date of 1415 rather than 1414; cf. Van Anrooij W., "De literaire ambities van Hennen van Merchtenen", *Tijdschrift voor Nederlandse Taal- en Letterkunde* 109 (1993) 291–314.

⁵² With regard to Brabant, Hennen is the first author to do so; see Van Anrooij W., "Hennen van Merchtenen en de lof op Brabancia", *Spiegel der Letteren* 35 (1993) 155–157.

⁵³ Hennen van Merchtenen, *Comicke van Brabant (1414)*, 148–149, vv. 3895–3918: 'Een .R. soe volcht den name slecht/ Ende bediet ons *Regalis*,/ Dats .j. coninclic lant, syts wys./ Een coeninclic lant macht wel heten,/ Ende dese letter, sekerlike,/ Stellic op Karrelemains sone, Puppin,/ Die een doemer der Sarresin/ Was, ende .j. voervechter der Kerstenhede,/ [...]/ Sijn vrouwe Yduburch, die Gods bruijt,/ Bracht hem ter wereld .ij. edele bloemen:/ Sente Begga ende die maget scoene/ Sente Gheertruijt van Nijvel./ Hier by mach Brabant heten wel/ Een salech, heilech, coninclic lant,/ Want daer ghegroijt ende gheplant/ Es uut menec fruijt, in Kerstenhede [...]'.

⁵⁴ A number of beguines from the Antwerp beguinage possessed harpsichords; cf. Duverger E., *Antwerpse kunstinventarissen uit de zeventiende eeuw*, Fontes historiae artis neerlandicae 1 (Brussels: 1984–2004); I thank Sarah Moran (Brown University) for this reference.

⁵⁵ See Mannaerts P. (ed.), Beghinae in Cantu Instructae: Musical Patrimony in Flemish Beguinages (Middle Ages-Late 18th C), Epitome Musical (Turnhout: 2009).

The liturgical offices or *historiae* in honour of the Merovingian saint, Begga, were part of the beguinages' liturgical and musical culture during the Counter-Reformation, and played a key role in the promotion and the liturgical and musical veneration of St. Begga. In addition, they also functioned as an argument of legitimation and justification in the foundation polemic, in which both Lambert le Bègue and Begga were considered as founders and etymological name-givers of beguines and beguinages. Consequently, the offices form the hinge point between scholarly and artistic practices.

The confrontation of the sources of these practices, the publications from the foundation polemic on the one hand, the actual musical sources from the beguinages on the other, brought to light an interesting paradox: the office referred to in scholarly writings (the Andenne office) is not the same as the office performed in the beguinages (the Utrecht office).

Although the texts of the Utrecht office contain the principal ingredients from the medieval Vita Beggae, and explicitly refer to important aspects of devotion, such as the Eucharist and Begga as the 'fundatrix begginarum', many chants and texts are borrowed from other sources, of which office chants for the Virgin Mary and other female saints are the most important. By contrast, the Andenne office was regarded as more authentic, possibly on the basis of its composition, but certainly on account of its provenance. Moreover, its frequent references to royalty and noble family connections were bound to be interpreted as belonging to the late-medieval tradition that saw Begga as an ancestor of the Carolingians. This tradition enabled the Brabantian scholars of the seventeenth century to establish a clear connection between the Merovingian saint Begga, her prestigious Pippinid and Carolingian descendants, the Brabantian dukes, and, ultimately, the governors of the Low Countries between 1598 and 1633, the archdukes Albert and Isabella. Van Ryckel's Vita Beggae, the most influential publication of the entire polemic, was dedicated to the archduchess Isabella Clara Eugenia, who had inaugurated the official recognition of Begga as a patron saint. The offices in honor of St. Begga thus provide a telling example of the early modern interrelation of scholarly and artistic practices, and of the legitimation of newly established tradition by means of a medieval one.

Appendix

Table 2. Begga office from Utrecht (1640), Antwerp (1663), and Turnhout (17th–18th century)⁵⁶

Abbreviations: A – antiphon; B – Benedictus antiphon; H – hymn; I – Invitatory; L – Lesson; M – Magnificat antiphon; N – Nocturn; R – Responsory; T – transposed mode. Rubrics are underlined; capitula, orationes, versicles and responses are not included.

	Incipit	Mode	Melody	Text type	Text source	References ⁵⁷
Vespers 1						
A	Ego quasi vitis fructificavi Cum reliquis	8		Prose		
	de laudibus. Psalmus Dixit Dominus cum reliquis de com-					
	muni nec virginum					
Н	nec martyrum Laude solemni modulemur	2	Stäblein 151	Verse		RH 10276
M	O fundatrix begginarum	8	Simile est regnum celorum ⁵⁸	Verse		RH 13018
Matins						
I	Laudemus Deum	1	Laudemus Deum nostrum ⁵⁹	Prose	Cf. Mary Magdalen office	
Н	Christe sanctorum decus	1		Verse	onice	RH 2991
N1						
Al	Ardens flamma castitatis	_		Verse		Cf. Andenne office, Lauds A1
A2	Relinquens aulas regias	_		Verse		Cf. Andenne office, Lauds A2

⁵⁶ Officia sanctorum archiepiscopatus Ultrajectensis (consulted copy: Utrecht, University Library 307.D.30); Antwerp, Archives of the Diocese: Beguinage archives, Mss. 351 and 377; Turnhout, Museum of the Beguinage, Mss. 3, 5, 8, 11, and 12.

⁵⁷ Reference editions used: *Liber Usualis Missae et Officii* (Paris – Tournai – Rome: 1944) [LU]; *Nocturnale Romanum* (Rome – Florence – Verona: 2002) [NR]; *Antiphonale Monasticum* (Solesmes: 1934) [AM]; Chevalier U., *Repertorium hymnologicum*, Subsidia hagiographica 4, 6 vols (Leuven: 1892–1920) [RH]; Stäblein B., *Hymnen I* [Stäblein].

Magnificat antiphon, mode 8, LU 1231 (Commune non virginum).
 Invitatory, mode 2, NR [110] (Commune non virginum); cf. similar melodies at NR 221* (Visitation BVM) and NR 277* (Nativity BVM).

Table 2 (cont.)

	Incipit	Mode	Melody	Text type	Text source	References
A3	Begga mater piissima	-		Verse		Cf. Andenne office, Lauds A3
L1-3	De communi nec virgi- num nec martyrum			Prose		,
R1	Iuncta thoro Begga mater	_		Verse	<i>Vita</i> caput 2–3	
R2	Persecutor dum par- entem	_		Verse	Vita caput 4	
R3	Iam soluta lege viri	_		Verse	Vita caput 5	Cf. Andenne office, R5
N2 A4	Pie disponens omnia	_		Verse		Cf. Andenne office, Lauds A5
A5	Mariae matris virginis	_		Verse		
A6	Sic filiarum gloriam	_		Verse		
L4	Cum sancta Begga, Begginarum gloriosa fundatrix			Prose	Vita caput 8	
R4	Cor ad Christum anhelabat	_		Verse	Vita caput 6	
L5	Singularia autem rei gerende de indicia adjecit			Prose	Vita caput 8	
R5	Ad exemplar Christi matris	_		Verse	Vita caput 6	
L6	Deus autem sancti- tatem famulae suae			Prose	<i>Vita</i> caput 9+10	
R6	Moritura mater pia	_		Verse	Vita caput 7	
N3	1				1	
A7	Humilis ancilla Christi	1	In tua patientia ⁶⁰	Verse		
A8	Castam humilemque mentem	4		Verse		
A9	Begga mater gloriosa Homilia in Evange- lium de commmuni nec virginum nec martyrum	5		Verse Prose		
R7	Meritorum tota plena	1T	Beata es Maria; ⁶¹ Standard R verse tone	Verse		

 $^{^{60}}$ Magnificat antiphon, mode 1, LU 1322, AM 769 (Lucy). 61 Responsory, mode 1, NR [160] (Common BVM).

Table 2 (cont.)

	Incipit	Mode	Melody	Text type	Text source	References
R8	Sancta mater vivens	7	Congratulamini; ⁶² Standard R verse tone	Verse		
Lauds						
Al	Ego quasi vitis	8		Prose	Sir 24, 23; Cf. Anna office	
A2	O sancta mater Begga	1	Fontes et omnia ⁶³	Prose	Ct 7, 6	
A3	Speciosa facta es	8	Manum suam aperuit ⁶⁴	Prose	Marian anti- phon ⁶⁵	
A4	O quam pulchra est	3	Trahe nos Virgo ⁶⁶	Prose	Sap 4, 1	
A5	Transite ad me omnes	7	$Introibo^{67}$	Prose	Sir 24, 26	
Н	Fortem virili* <u>ut</u> in communi nec virginum nec martyrum	_		Verse		
В	Regnum mundi	5		Prose		
Little hours	Ad horas dicuntur antiphonae de Laudibus					
Vespers 2	Omnia ut in primis					
M	Ave mater speciosa	1	Sanctificavit Dominus ⁶⁸	Verse	Cf. Cath- erine office	
Н	Laude solemni modulemur	2	Stäblein 151	Verse		RH 10276

⁶² Responsory, mode 7, NR [159] (Common BVM), cf. also the responsory *Gloriosae virginis*, NR 279* (Nativity BVM).

⁶³ Antiphon, mode 1, LU 884 (Pentecost); cf. also *Vos amici mei estis*, LU 1111 (Commune apostolorum).

⁶⁵ Speciosa facta es et suavis in deliciis tuis, sancta Dei Genetrix (LU 1259, AM 708).

⁶⁷ Antiphon, mode 7, LU 934 (Corpus Christi); cf. also LU 845 (Ascension).

⁶⁴ Antiphon, mode 8, LU 1236 (Commune non virginum); cf. similar melodies at LU 1626 (Nativity BVM), LU 1325 (Lucy), LU 1341 (Agnes), LU 1606 (Assumption BVM).

⁶⁶ Antiphon, mode 4, LU 1321 (Conception BVM); cf. also the textual similarity ('Quam pulchra es Gertrudis et quam decora in deliciis […]') on the same melody in AM 1128 (Gertrude the Great).

⁶⁸ Magnificat antiphon, mode 1, LU 1242 (In dedicatione ecclesiae); cf. also the related but shorter melodies LU 1416 (Annunciation BVM) and LU 1861 (BVM).

Table 3. Related texts in the Begga offices from Utrecht and Andenne

The following transcription is diplomatic: capitalisation, spelling and interpunction of the sources have been retained; the underlined text differs in Andenne and Utrecht; the text in italics in the hymn occurs in both readings, but in different stanzas.

Utrecht		Anden	ne	
Matins A1	Ardens flamma charitatis, se decore castitatis sancta Begga induit, cui mundus florens viluit.	Lauds	A1	Propter fidem Deitatis se decorem castitatis Beata Begga induit cui mundus florens viluit
Matins A2	Relinquens aulas regias, septem struxit Ecclesias; ut Christo vacans coelica serviret <u>cum</u> leticia.	Lauds	A2	Aulas <u>contemnens</u> Regias septem struxit Æcclesias <u>in quibus Deo</u> caelica seruiret <u>in</u> laetitia
Matins A3	Begga mater piissima, aspirans ad coelestia, Christo dicavit plurima virginitatis agmina.	Lauds	A3	Caro cius vel anima dum sitiret caelestia Deo collegit plurima virginitatis agmina
Matins A4	Pie disponens omnia, fert vite necessaria, Begga mater clientibus, mentemque dat coelestibus.	Lauds	A5	Quibus disponens omnia de suo necessaria subiectior his omnibus vixit in Dei laudibus
Matins R3	Iam soluta lege viri, Christi jugo vult muniri: Romam petit, <u>crudiri</u> pietate cupiens.	Matins	R5	Iam soluta lege viri tractat solum quae sunt Dei petit Romam quam devote mox suscipit amor Pape
Matins V3	Sacra Christo reddens vota; secum retulit devota, quas optabat mente tota, Sanctorum reliquias.	Matins	V5	<u>Pia quoque fovens</u> vota dona confert sanctissima
Vespers H	Laude solenni modulemur <u>omi</u> Carmen, illustris sub honore M <u>Et</u> Deo iuncte <u>veneranda</u> Begg <u>Festa colamus</u> .	latris,	carm <u>iam</u>	de solemni modulemur <u>hymni</u> nen illustris sub honore Matris Deo iunctae <u>super astra</u> Beggae <u>ere sponse</u>
	Quae <u>thori consors</u> , pia, casta, p Post <u>viri caedem</u> decus omne s <u>Sprevit</u> , <u>et</u> vivens <u>tibi sacra</u> Ch Hostia fulsit.	aecli	post men	e <u>solo degens</u> pia casta prudens <u>necem sponsi</u> decus omne saecli <u>te despexit</u> tibi Christe vivens a fulsit
	Virginum turmas generosa ma Colligens, castas, humilisque, s Coelitum prompta domino dic Mente sacravit.	<u>ummo</u>	saepi parc	e conregnans meritisque prestans ius multam miseris medelam at offensis foveatque votis a nostris

Table 3 (cont.)

Spes ave, nostrae decus et catervae, Iam fruens Christo; <u>meritis clientes</u> Adjuva, <u>votis faveasque semper</u> <u>Sedula nostris</u>.

Tu gregem <u>custos pia filiarum</u> Mater <u>instaura</u>: fideique penna Subleva <u>mentes</u>, <u>superum sacrandas</u> <u>Mater amore</u>.

Sit Deo trino decus atque virtus, Begga que caelo rutilans adorat: Praestet, ut sanctae videant clientes Gaudia matris. Amen. Spes ave nostrae decus et cateruae iam fruens Christo <u>super astra gaude</u> <u>iamque sacrati referens diei</u> <u>gaudia salue</u>

Tu gregem mater <u>veniens frequenter</u> <u>caelitus munda</u> fideique penna subleva <u>caelis veniente sponso</u> <u>sponsa superno</u>

Prestet hoc summus Pater atque natus parque procedens ab utroque flamen dulce solamen veniae iuvamen spes amor Amen

Table 4. Begga office from Andenne (1669)⁶⁹

			*
	Incipit	Mode	Text type
Procession			
A	Ave virgo stella maris	1	Verse
Vespers 1			
Al	In iustorum consilio	1	Prose
A2	Nomen Dei laudabile	2	Verse
A3	Sanctae mentis Beggae	3	Verse
A4	Spes illius et adiutor	4	Verse
A5	$\hat{\mathcal{N}}$ ostrae semper sit salutis	5	Verse
Н	Laude solemni modulemur	2	Verse
R	Tui Begga caelibatus	6T	Prose
M	O Rex sanctarum	2	Prose
Matins			
I	Christum laudemus	1	Prose
N1			
Al	Aeternum lumen patris	1	Prose
A2	Haec sacra Pippino	2	Prose
A3	Instar Susannae	3	Prose
R1	Insignis pietatis	1	Prose
R2	Matrona sancta diligentius	2 3	Prose
R3	Audiens ancilla Christi	3	Prose

⁶⁹ Brussels, Royal Library, Ms. II 3316.

Table 4 (cont.)

	Incipit	Mode	Text type
N2			
A4	Iam femur accigens	4	Prose
A5	O rex virtutum det iter	5	Prose
A5	Porta Syon munda patet	6	Prose
R4	O veneranda matrona	4	Prose
R5	Iam soluta lege	5	Verse
R6	Beata Begga plena erat	6T	Prose
N3			
A7	Caeli Reginae Deitatis	7	Prose
A8	Mens pia gaudebat Beggae	8	Prose
A9	Gentibus hoc votum fecit Deus	1	Prose
R7	Cum iam Dei amica	7	Prose
R8	Rex anglorum alloquiis	8	Verse
R9	Gloriose Regum	1	Prose
Lauds			
Al	Propter fidem Deitatis	2	Verse
A2	Aulas contemnens regias	3	Verse
A3	Caro eius vel anima	4	Verse
A4	His sanctae Matris studio	5	Verse
A5	Quibus disponens omnia	6T	Verse
В	Benedicta sit Trinitas aequalis	7	Verse
Vespers 2			
M	O virtutum lampas clara	1	Verse
[additional]			
Ā	O beata Begga clara	8	Verse
A	Nos prece sacrata Rege	7	Verse

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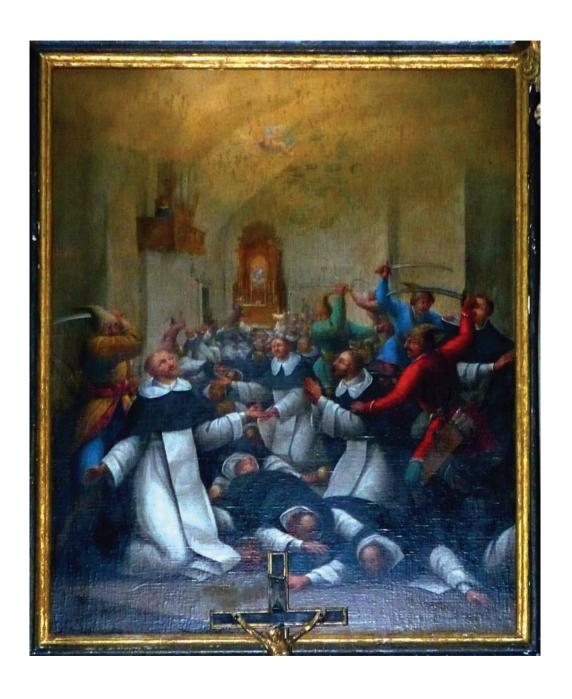
[Plate I. Spies – Fig. 1, p. 166; Fig. 11a, p. 188]











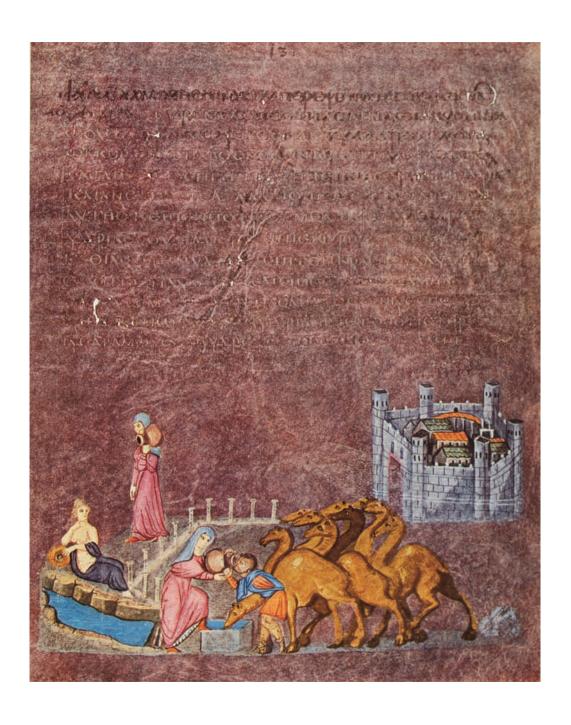








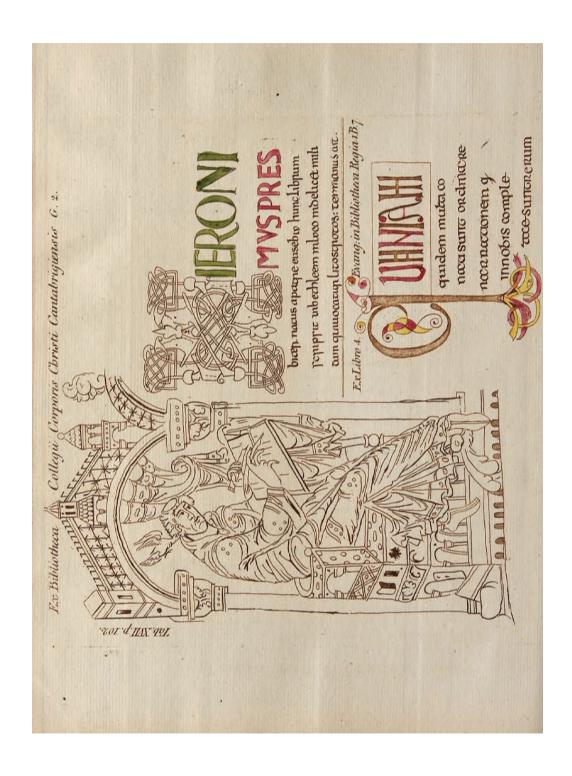


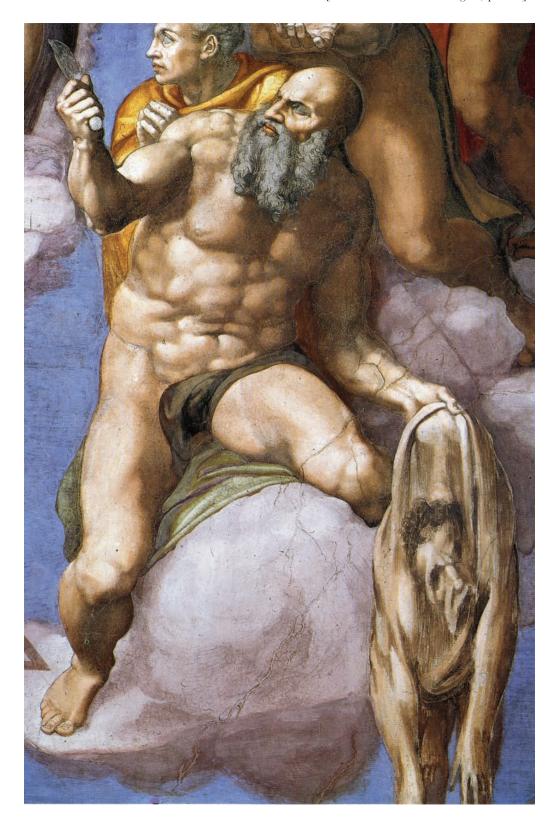




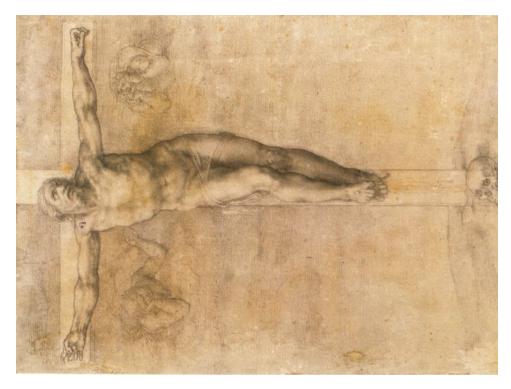


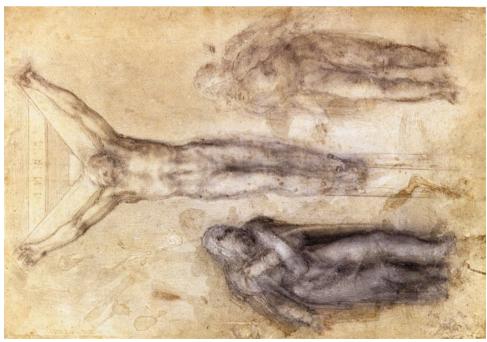






[Plate XVI. Keizer – Fig. 4, p. 416; Fig. 5, p. 417]





MEDIEVALISM AND MAGIC: ILLUSTRATING CLASSICAL FRENCH FAIRY TALES*

Daphne M. Hoogenboezem

'Once upon a time': the emblematic opening phrase immediately places fairy tales in a distant but indefinite past. Judging from numerous modern illustrated editions for children, however, fairy tales seem to be set against a medieval background. Motifs that are associated with fairy tale books as well as medieval times include Gothic castles with drawbridges, jousting knights and princesses locked up in towers. The setting seems relevant for some well-known tales, which, according to Ian Ziolkowski's recent study, go back to the medieval period. Romantic authors in particular reevaluated popular culture and the Middle Ages. This would explain the medieval setting used in many nineteenth-century tales, including several tales from Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm's Kinder- und Hausmärchen (Children's and Household Tales, 1812–1815). The connection between the classical French tales and the medieval is conveyed not only in the text, but also in the illustrations of Romantic artists like Gustave Doré and George Cruikshank, who managed to impress the medievalist fairy tale setting firmly on our minds through their monumental fairy tale editions packed with crenellated towers and arched windows.

However, these nineteenth-century illustrators did not start the medievalist fairy tale imagery, and their chiefly medieval visual interpretation corresponds only partly to the text of the French tales, in which a historical setting is described that is far more ambiguous. Like many fairy tale authors of his day, Charles Perrault gave his fairy tales a medieval touch by referring to old towers, tournaments and knights. The fairy tale authors thus contributed, according to Jean-Paul Sermain,

¹ Ziolkowski J., Fairy Tales from Before the Fairy Tales: The Medieval Latin Past of Wonderful Lies (Michigan: 2007).

^{*} Fairy tale pictures tell tales of their own, but I could not have begun to put them into words without the help and encouragement of Els C.S. Jongeneel (University of Groningen) and Paul J. Smith (University of Leiden). Many thanks to both of them.

to spreading a favourable image of the 'Gothic period'.² Many tales, though, also contain intertextual references to Antiquity and seventeenth-century France. We find mythological characters such as Cupid and Psyche, for example, in the tales of the female author Marie-Catherine d'Aulnoy. References to the seventeenth century include names of Parisian stores³ and allusions to figures such as the Sun King.

At the start of the French fairy tale vogue, in the seventeenth century, illustrations were an uncommon element in fairy tale books, and it is significant that Perrault added them to his manuscript. These illustrations are the starting point for three centuries of fairy tale imagery. Although illustration is sometimes used to raise the literary status of a genre, Perrault's deliberately naïve images seem to underline the connection with oral popular culture. They contrast with the prevailing classicist doctrine as they sometimes challenge the classical rule of unity and contain medievalist aspects, some of which seem to imitate medieval imagery that had continued to be used in chapbooks. Perrault's contemporaries rarely added illustrations to their tales, but D'Aulnov did. Although Perrault's and D'Aulnov's tales were both illustrated with copper engravings by Antoine Clouzier, a comparison of the illustrations used in the books of these two famous representatives of the French fairy tale vogue will reveal striking differences in style and composition that seem to reflect their different opinions on the definition of the new genre. When compared with English and Dutch editions, it turns out that the use of medievalist aspects varied, depending not only on the author but on the country and period as well. I will start, though, with a brief introduction dealing with the first editions of Perrault's and D'Aulnov's fairy tales in France.

² Sermain J.-P., "Le conte de fées classique et le Moyen Age (1690–1712)", in Damian-Grint P. (ed.), *Medievalism and 'manière gothique' in Enlightenment France* (Oxford: 2006) 84.

³ Barchilon J., *Le conte merveilleux français (1690–1790)* (Paris: 1975) 46, indicates references to the jewellery shop Dautel (in "Le Prince Lutin"), to the confectioner Lecoq (in "La Princesse Printanière") and to the butcher's shop Guerbois (in "Le Mouton"), which existed both in the fairyland D'Aulnoy described in her tales and in Paris, according to *Le livre commode des adresses de Paris pour l'année 1692*. Perrault's tales contain such references too. J.-P. Collinet, in Perrault C., *Contes* (Paris: 1981) 337 (note 14), mentions Cinderella's sisters who buy their 'mouches' (artificial beauty spots aristocratic ladies used to wear to emphasize their fair complexion) at "La bonne faiseuse", a shop located in the Rue Saint Denis.

From Manuscript to Print

In the last decade of the seventeenth century, Marie-Catherine d'Aulnoy launched the genre of the literary fairy tale in France with the publication, in 1690, of her tale "L'île de la félicité" (The Island of Happiness). Other authors soon followed her example. Charles Perrault, a member of the French Academy and a pioneer of the new genre as well, published a versified adaptation of Giovanni Boccaccio's well-known tale *Griselda* in 1691. The fairy tale vogue reached its highest point in the years 1697 and 1698. The first printed edition of Perrault's collection *Contes ou Histoires du temps passé* (Tales or Stories of Times Past), consisting of eight tales, appeared in 1697, while D'Aulnoy published eight volumes, which, together, contained twenty-four tales.⁵

Five of Perrault's eight tales, however, had previously been published, in 1695, in a manuscript entitled *Les Contes de ma Mère l'Oye* (The Tales of my Mother Goose)⁶ and dedicated to 'Mademoiselle', that is to say Elisabeth Charlotte d'Orléans, the niece of the Sun King.⁷ As Ségolène Le Men has noted, the purpose of this manuscript seems to have been twofold.⁸ Besides being a present for the nineteen-year-old princess, the deluxe dedication copy was also a model for the first printed edition published by the Parisian printer Claude Barbin. The manuscript was written in calligraphy by an anonymous artist, who might have been an acquaintance of Perrault, as he also produced a

⁴ The tale was part of D'Aulnoy's novel *Histoire d'Hipolyte, compte de Duglas* (1690).

⁵ D'Aulnoy M.-C., Les contes des fées, 4 vols. (1697), Contes nouveaux, ou les fées à la mode, 4 vols. (1698).

⁶ The five tales included in *Les Contes de Ma Mère l'Oye* are "La Belle au bois dormant" (Sleeping Beauty), "Le Petit Chaperon rouge" (Little Red Riding Hood), "La Barbe bleue" (Bluebeard), "Le Maître Chat ou le Chat botté" (Puss-in-Boots) and "Les Fées" (The Fairies). Three tales were added to the printed edition *Contes ou Histoires du temps passé*: "Cendrillon, ou la petite pantoufle de verre" (Cinderella), "Riquet à la Houppe" (Riquet with the Tuft), and "Le Petit Poucet" (Hop-o'-My-Thumb).

⁷ Although the dedication letter was signed by Pierre Darmancour, Charles Perrault's son, the fairy tale collection was attributed to the father in the French Gazette and literary magazine *Le Mercure Galant* in January 1697 as well as in the obituary notice (1703), cf. Collinet, in Perrault, *Contes* 25–30. As so often in the seventeenth century, the simulated anonymity of the author seems to have been part of the playful, unauthoritarian way relations between the author and the audience were conceived, cf. Grande N., "Des auteurs honteux?", *Une histoire de la 'fonction auteur' est-elle possible?* (Saint-Etienne: 2001) 125–140.

⁸ Le Men S., "Mother Goose Illustrated: From Perrault to Doré", *Poetics Today* 13, 1 (1992) 20.

manuscript of another of Perrault's works, *Adam, ou la création de l'homme* (1695).⁹ One of the most remarkable aspects of Perrault's manuscript is that it is illustrated with a frontispiece, a vignette at the beginning of the dedication letter 'A Mademoiselle', and five vignettes introducing the tales. The illustrations in the manuscript are made with pen and ink and coloured with gouache. The illustrator Clouzier copied the images in his copper engravings for the Barbin edition. His signature only appears on the frontispiece.

The presence of the illustrations in the manuscript and the first printed edition of the Mother Goose tales is striking as, at the time, relatively few literary works were illustrated. According to Alain-Marie Bassy, the art of illustration faced a crisis in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century. As a consequence, illustrations were usually absent in literary works of the period or limited to a frontispiece. There were two exceptions. In spite of the general lack of attention for illustration, images played an important role in fable and emblem books. In the seventeenth century, both genres already had a long pictorial tradition. Emblem books had usually been illustrated since Andrea Alciato invented the genre in 1531. The first printed fables with illustrations were published in the fifteenth century.

Illustrations had various functions in these books. Although the image is usually considered an essential element of the emblem, Stephen Orgel puts the importance of the illustration into perspective. He notes that although Andrea Alciato defined it as a visual epigram, he did not actually intend to add pictures to his book. It was in fact the German publisher of the first printed edition who suggested that illustrations would make the book more attractive. At first, images were

⁹ Picaud C., "Contes de ma Mère l'Oye", in Piffault O. (ed.), Il était une fois les contes de fées (Paris: 2001) notice 34.

¹⁰ According to Bassy A.-M., "Le texte et l'image", in Chartier R. – Martin C. (eds.), *Histoire de l'édition française, Le livre triomphant (1660–1830)* (Paris: 1984) 140, the history of the illustrated book does know various periods of crisis, among which were the years 1690–1710. This is the exact period of the first fairy tale vogue. By contrast, the illustrated book flourished in the Renaissance (1545–1565) and in the second half of the eighteenth century (1755–1775).

¹¹ Canivet D., L'illustration de la poésie et du roman français au XVII^e siècle (Paris: 1957) 60: 'L'illustration de la poésie et du roman pendant le dernier tiers du siècle est très décevante. Peu d'ouvrages sont illustrés autrement que par des frontispices assez médiocres'.

¹² Orgel S., "Textual Icons: Reading Early Modern Illustrations", in Rhodes N. – Sawday J. (eds.), *The Renaissance Computer: Knowledge Technology in the First Age of Print* (London – New York: 2000) 60.

added to the emblems merely for decoration. As fables were associated with children's education, as later noted in John Locke's famous essay "Some Thoughts Concerning Education" (1693), these images could have a didactic purpose. In other cases, though, illustrations were used, as Paul J. Smith has noted in his analysis of the sixteenth-century frontispieces by Marcus Gheeraerts, to give a new value to the fable, a genre of simple origin like the fairy tale, and turn it into a more prestigious literary genre.¹³

Like emblems and fables, fairy tales belonged to the emblematic tradition, and yet early fairy tale books were rarely illustrated. Illustrations were absent in most editions of the Italian collections *Le piacevoli notti* (The Pleasant Nights, first edition 1550–1553) by Gianfrancesco Straparola and *Lo cunto de li cunte* (The Tale of Tales, first edition 1634–1636) by Giambattista Basile, which were a source of inspiration for many French fairy tale authors, including Perrault and D'Aulnoy. Or else, the illustration was confined to a decorative element or a monogram on the title-page. Monograms, which can be found in the original Italian editions as well as in the French translations, were a symbol for the publisher and did not relate to the content of the book. Illustrations were also absent in D'Aulnoy's first tale "L'île de la félicité", and in Perrault's versified tales "Grisélidis", "Peau d'Ane" (Donkey Skin) and "Les Souhaits ridicules" (The Ridiculous Wishes).

By adding a gouache and a 'moral' to each tale, Perrault copied the page lay-out of the fable and the emblem. Although the gouaches are not signed, it seems likely that Perrault was involved in the design of the illustrations, as he paid much attention to the production of the manuscript. It is also possible that Perrault made the gouaches himself. Not only did Perrault have a professional interest in art, he also had a private art collection and he drew for a hobby. Perrault's interest in illustrated books is further shown by the fact that he collaborated on the illustrated book *Le Labyrinthe de Versailles* (1677). The publisher Barbin, too, had a preference for illustrated books, and so it is also

¹³ Smith P.J., "Titelprenten van Marcus Gheeraerts", in Van Vaeck M. – Brems H. – Claassens G. (eds.), *De Stone of Alciato: Literature and Visual Culture in the Low Countries. Essays in Honour of Karel Porteman* (Leuven: 2003) 538.

¹⁴ Perrault C. – Soriano M. (eds.), *Contes* (Paris: 1991) 23: 'Fasciné par ce petit livre qui est en même temps un bel objet, l'Académicien ne peut s'empêcher – pour l'embellir encore – d'y ajouter des vignettes de son cru qu'il colorie avec soin: une par conte et un frontispice correspondant au sous-titre [...]. Depuis toujours dessiner – ou suivant son expression – griffonner, le soulage'.

possible, as Le Men has noted, that 'the visual strategy of the Barbin edition of Perrault's *Contes* was based on an earlier example of La Fontaine's *Fables*', published by Barbin in 1668. ¹⁵ This fable book was illustrated with vignettes by François Chauveau, which were placed between the title and the beginning of the text of each fable.

While the renewed page lay-out of Perrault's *Contes* fits in well with the literary emblematic tradition, the text and illustrations, on the other hand, have several characteristics that seem to underline the modest origin of the fairy tale genre. In the dedication letter 'A Mademoiselle' prefacing the collection, for instance, the author associates his tales with popular culture, as he writes:

Il est vrai que ces Contes donnent une image de ce qui se passe dans les moindres Familles, où la louable impatience d'instruire les enfants fait imaginer des Histoires dépourvues de raison, pour s'accommoder à ses mêmes enfants qui n'en ont pas encore; mais à qui convient-il mieux de connaître comment vivent les Peuples qu'aux Personnes que le Ciel destine à les conduire? Le désir de cette connaissance a poussé des Héros, et même des Héros de votre Race, jusque dans des huttes ou des cabanes, pour y voir de près et par eux-mêmes ce qui se passait de plus particulier: cette connaissance leur ayant paru nécessaire pour leur parfaite instruction. 16

According to Sermain, Perrault also tried to emulate in his writing the naïve style of the 'conteuses' by using what he calls 'le tour simple'. ¹⁷ Perrault's relatively simple language is reminiscent of the oral tales. The naïve style and composition of the illustrations in the manuscript and the first edition add to the connection with popular culture.

In the dedication letter Perrault also suggests that tales were used for children's education. Although Perrault wrote his tales for a mixed audience, he could also have used a non-academic writing style in order to make his tales intelligible for a younger audience. The illustrations, too, have didactic value. They structure the manuscript and the first edition of his tales, and, by representing a fundamental (and usually recurrent) scene of the story, they also offer a reading aid. Besides being decorations in the manuscript, the illustrations reinforce the connection with popular culture as well as children's education, due to their deliberately naïve and sometimes medievalist composition.

¹⁵ Le Men, "Mother Goose Illustrated" 21.

¹⁶ Perrault, Contes 127–128 (my emphasis).

¹⁷ Sermain J.-P., Métafictions (1670–1730). La réflexivité dans la littérature d'imagination (Paris: 2002) 369.

Perrault referred to tales passed down through the ages in reaction to the prevailing classicist doctrine, as he used his tales as a tool in the 'Querelle des Anciens et des Modernes'. Perrault was the most prominent defender of the cause of the Moderns in this famous 'Querelle', which, in the second half of the seventeenth century, opposed the Ancients, who sought their artistic inspiration in classical art, to the Moderns, who pleaded for a revaluation of national art. By choosing to write fairy tales, which were inspired by popular culture instead of classical fables, Perrault reacted against the classicist doctrine. He also wrote in favour of the marvellous aspect in old wives' tales in other works, such as his *Parallèle des Anciens et des Modernes (Tome III)*, published in 1692.¹⁸

Perrault combined textual and pictorial references to childhood and medieval times. These styles do not necessarily exclude each other, as 'Renaissance and Enlightenment historians', according to Seth Lerer, 'saw medieval Europe as a childish time, a kind of cultural formation moment in the history of the West that they, more modern figures, had outgrown'. By the beginning of the eighteenth century, this idea of the Middle Ages as the 'childhood of mankind' had become a literary commonplace. On the style of the Middle Ages as the 'childhood of mankind' had become a literary commonplace.

A manuscript of D'Aulnoy's tales has never been found, and it is uncertain if she contributed to the creation of the illustrations for the first printed edition of her *Contes des fées*, which was published two months after Perrault's collection by Barbin.²¹ For D'Aulnoy's tales the publisher used a page lay-out that is similar to the one in Perrault's

¹⁸ Perrault C., *Parallèle des Anciens et des Modernes (Tome III)* (Geneva: 1979) 268: 'L'Abbé: Rien ne peut estre trop fabuleux dans ce genre de Poësie, les contes de vieille [...] en fournissent les plus beaux sujets, & donnent plus de plaisir que les intrigues les mieux conduites et les plus régulières'.

¹⁹ Lerer S., Children's Literature: A Reader's History from Aesop to Harry Potter (Chicago – London: 2008) 13.

²⁰ Abbé Massieu, *Histoire de la poësie françoise* (Paris, Prault Fils: 1739) 67: 'tout le dessein de cet Ouvrage est de représenter notre Poësie dans quatre états différents; dans sa *naissance* d'abord, & puis dans son *enfance*; ensuite dans sa jeunesse, & enfin dans la force de son âge' (my emphasis). The phases of *birth* and *childhood* correspond to the period starting with the reign of Henri I in 1008 and ending with the death of François I in 1515.

²¹ As no first edition of the collection *Contes des fées* seems to have been preserved, the analysis in this paper will be based upon the illustrations from the following editions, The Hague, Meindert Uytwerf: 1698, and Paris, Veuve Ricoeur: 1710. For the analysis of D'Aulnoy's second collection I have used Paris, Veuve de Theodore Girard: 1698, and Paris, La Compagnie des Libraires: 1711.

collection. Although only the illustrations for the frame story "Don Ferdinand de Tolède" and the tale "Le nain jaune" (The Yellow Dwarf) have a signature, the vignettes in D'Aulnoy's *Contes des fées* were probably all made by Clouzier. In D'Aulnoy's second collection, *Les Contes nouveaux ou les Fées à la Mode*, all images are marked 'Raymond fecit'. In her article, Gabrielle Verdier explains that she was unable to identify the illustrator, but adds that the word 'fecit' was usually added to indicate that the engraver was not responsible for the design.²² It remains uncertain who was responsible for the design, but it is possible that D'Aulnoy was involved in the process.

Frontispieces: Old Maids and Salon Ladies Introduce a New Genre

Before analysing Perrault's and D'Aulnoy's frontispieces, a clear definition of the term frontispiece needs to be given. Indeed, the terms 'title-page', 'frontispiece' and 'first page of the text' are often used interchangeably, as has been noted by Margaret Smith.²³ Earlier uses of the term frontispiece explain part of the confusion, as the word has been used to denote the engraved title-page as well as the print facing the title-page. In the fairy tale books I will discuss here, the frontispiece is always the illustration facing the title-page. The frontispiece has a double function. Since books were usually sold without binding, the frontispiece was a kind of cover. It provides information about the content of the book and its place in the literary tradition, but it also serves to attract the attention of the reader and seduce him or her.

The portrait frontispiece was first introduced into the printed book in the early years of the sixteenth century. The portrait frontispiece can be connected, as David Bland has noted, with the medieval manuscript, which often contained a miniature representing the author and / or the patron.²⁴ Soon, however, the portrait was replaced by an emblematic frontispiece combining architectural motifs such as columns and arches, with inscriptions, allegorical figures and other symbolical components. According to Marc Fumaroli, who analysed several examples of seventeenth-century frontispieces in his study *L'Ecole du silence*, these

 $^{^{22}}$ Verdier G., "Figures de la conteuse dans les contes de fées féminins", XVII $^{\epsilon}$ siècle 45, 180 (1993) 485.

Smith M., The Title-Page: Its Early Development 1460-1510 (London: 2000) 12-13.
 Bland D., A History of Book Illustration (London: 1969) 140.

complex compositions were the humanistic pictorial reflection of the antique debate on the difference between the normal everyday spoken word and the eloquent word.²⁵ The fact that the image needed to be deciphered slowed down the pace of the reader and thus marked the transition from normal spoken language into the world of literature. The emblematic frontispiece remained popular throughout the seventeenth century and well into the eighteenth century. In the period of the fairy tale vogue, most large in-folio editions were prefaced by complex emblematic frontispieces that needed to be read like a rebus.

By contrast, the frontispieces used in the small duodecimo collections by Perrault and D'Aulnoy are relatively simple narrative images. The scene in Perrault's manuscript from 1695 [Fig. 1] and Clouzier's copperplate from 1697 [Fig. 2] do not need to be deciphered or read. They depict an old peasant woman or a nurse dressed in simple clothes who tells stories to three children dressed in luxurious clothes. The modest interior, the fireplace and the candle on the mantelpiece evoke the 'veillée' and the way popular tales were supposed to have been passed on since time immemorial. The image thus represents the production, transmission and reception of the fairy tale genre, an unusual motif for a literary frontispiece, according to Christophe Martin.²⁶

The storyteller and her audience represent the social act of transmission of the tales, which recalls the numerous medieval frontispieces representing authors who offer their book to their patron or read from their work to an audience. In these medieval frontispieces the social aspect of the creation and transmission of literature is underlined, rather than an emblematic reference to the content or purpose of the book. Another resemblance is the fact that a social contrast often exists both between the medieval author and his patron and between Mother Goose and her aristocratic audience. Instead of the monumental archway, which is usually represented in seventeenth-century frontispieces, Perrault's frontispiece represents the modest interior of a small farmhouse. The author seems to invite his aristocratic audience to shelter from the rigid and cold rules of classicism and to rediscover the simple language and marvellous material of the popular tales. The

²⁵ Fumaroli M., L'école du silence, le sentiment des images au XVII^e siècle (Paris: 1994) 324–342.

²⁶ Martin C., "L'illustration du conte de fées (1697–1789)", Cahiers de l'Association Internationale des Etudes Françaises 57 (2005) 125.



Fig. 1. [Col. Pl. V] Old peasant woman telling tales. From [Charles Perrault], *Contes de ma Mère l'Oye*, Anonymous manuscript (1695), frontispiece. Pen and ink drawing coloured with gouache. New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, MA 1505.



Fig. 2. The gouaches from the manuscript served as a model for the engravings in the first printed edition. From Charles Perrault, *Histoires ou Contes du temps passé avec des moralitéz* (Paris, Claude Barbin: 1697), frontispiece. Copperplate engraving by Antoine Clouzier. Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France: BnF: Rés. P. Y² 263.

gouache medium and the use of the vivid and warm colours reinforce the association with the medieval illuminations, for French classicist artists, according to François Pupil, preferred works of art in a sober style and with cold colours.²⁷

Despite the fact that the storyteller scene and the colours in Perrault's frontispiece call to mind medieval imagery, there are important differences as well. Medieval authors are usually dressed well; Perrault's storyteller, on the other hand, is wearing simple clothes. The book or manuscript played an important role in medieval frontispieces, whereas Perrault's frontispiece refers to oral popular culture. Few medieval images seem to exist that represent storytelling, except for the illustrations in the remarkable fifteenth-century text *Les évangiles des quenouilles* (The Distaff Gospels), which often represent the traditional winter evening gatherings during which women were spinning and talking.²⁸

When compared with other seventeenth-century frontispieces, the storyteller scene in Perrault's frontispiece is innovative. The symbols used to suggest the spoken word, such as the raised arm and the spindle, were not new. The motif of the spindle had been used in the debate on the role of women (by men and women alike) to indicate the limited sphere of female activity and intellectual development. By the seventeenth century, the spindle usually implied a depreciation of the female speaker. Furthermore, the candle and the fire in Perrault's image suggest that the stories are told at night and the modest interior completes the image: we are listening to old wives' chit-chat. The teller's tales could have amusement value (even for an upper-class audience), but Perrault did not, perhaps, consider them serious literature. The symbols used to suggest that the stories are told at night and the modest interior completes the image:

D'Aulnoy's frontispieces also represent a storytelling scene. It seems evident, though, that she did not identify with the image of the peasant storyteller in Perrault's frontispiece. No first edition of her collection

²⁷ Pupil F., Le Style Troubadour, ou la nostalgie du bon vieux temps (Nancy: 1985) 57.

²⁸ Jeay M. (ed.), *Les Evangiles des Quenouilles* (Paris – Montreal: 1985). This edition of the anonymous collection of popular beliefs includes several examples of illustrations representing country women with distaffs.

²⁹ Mathieu-Castellani G., *La quenouille et la lyre* (Paris: 1998) 43: 'Le motif de la quenouille, attribut de la femme industrieuse, cheville ouvrière du foyer, synechdoque du discours anti-féministe'.

³⁰ 'L'extraordinaire succès des *Contes* aurait sans doute surpris Perrault qui pensait posséder bien d'autres titres de gloire que cet ouvrage relevant d'un genre mineur à ses yeux, ouvrage d'ailleurs dont il n'a jamais revendiqué ouvertement la paternité', as has noted A. Picon (ed.), in Perrault C., *Mémoires de ma vie* (Paris: 1993) 1.

Les contes des fées (1697) has survived, but an early frontispiece can be found in the Dutch edition by Meindert Uytwerf (1698). This frontispiece shows a clear change in perspective, as the storyteller is not an old peasant woman but an aristocratic lady. The closed space in Perrault's frontispiece has been replaced by a less intimate and more open room with big windows, a salon, perhaps. The classical columns and draperies are reminiscent of a theatre. When looking at the frontispiece, the reader is no longer the observer of a private scene. He becomes part of the audience, as the storyteller, who is now facing him, seems to address the fashionably dressed audience as well as the reader. The raised arm, symbol of the spoken word, is added, but the spindle has disappeared and the tales are now told during the day.

The frontispiece prefacing D'Aulnoy's second collection, *Contes nouveaux ou les fées à la mode* (1711), shows an even more explicit revaluation of the storyteller. As Verdier's analysis of this image reveals, the storyteller has become a classical sibyl with a modern touch as she wears glasses and reads the tales to her audience. In the book we can perceive the title of D'Aulnoy's first collection, *Les Contes des fées*, and her first tale, "Gracieuse et Percinet". In these two frontispieces the tales are no longer considered the chit-chat of an old maid. They are the stories of an author who created a new literary genre and tried to position it within the literary field of her day. D'Aulnoy's tales, staging active and resourceful heroines, are read as proto-feminist writings by modern-day scholars.

By adding the storyteller-scene frontispiece to their collections, both Perrault and D'Aulnoy inscribed themselves in a pictorial tradition going back to the medieval period. Whereas Perrault used the scene and the anonymous storyteller Mother Goose to emphasize the popular origin of his tales, D'Aulnoy seems to underline female authorship. The scenes represented in D'Aulnoy's frontispieces echo the images in manuscripts of the works of several medieval authors, including Christine de Pizan, one of the first women who insisted on her authority as a female author. She emphasized her female authorship not only through text but also through illustrations. In the frontispiece prefacing

³¹ Verdier, "Figures de la conteuse dans les contes de fées féminins" 486.

³² D'Aulnoy's tales are interspersed with references to other fairy tales, to the fables by La Fontaine and to mythology. Besides the salon-like game of intertextuality, those references reveal the author's wish to legitimize the genre, as has noted Jasmin, in d'Aulnoy, *Contes des Fées* 757, note 2.

the manuscript of her collected works (London, British Library: Harley Ms. 4431, fol. 261v), for instance, she can be seen instructing her son. The image shows that, in her day, Pizan was a respected author, as she is dressed well. The large chair, the books on the desk and the luxurious décor further contribute to the dignity and the intelligence that emanate from this female author.³³ It is uncertain if D'Aulnoy was involved in the design of the engravings illustrating her tales. Like her predecessor Pizan, though, D'Aulnoy aspired to literary authority and challenged the traditional role-models through her texts and images.

Besides gender-bending motifs, D'Aulnoy's texts contain a patchwork of literary, folkloric and Antique elements combined with allusions to the French society of her day. Medieval motifs are an important component of her tales. In D'Aulnoy's tale "Babiole", for instance, knights fight for their princess in a duel. This motif also figures in the tale "Gracieuse et Percinet". In tales such as "La Belle aux cheveux d'or" (The Beauty with the Golden Hair) and "Le Rameau d'or" (The Golden Bough), old towers, illuminated manuscripts and stained glass windows, which turn out to be alive, create a magical and medieval setting. However, the pictures added to the tales all represent classical themes. Babiole and the protagonists from "The Golden Bough" are represented surrounded by columns and draperies. The medieval aspects in the text of D'Aulnoy's tales are neglected by the illustrations whereas the classicist aspects are reinforced. Despite the rough lining and somewhat awkward compositions, the engravings Clouzier made for D'Aulnoy's tales seem less naïve than the ones in Perrault's Mother Goose Tales.

The illustrations in Perrault's tales have various characteristics that reinforce their archaic or naïve impression, which seems deliberately created by Perrault and Clouzier. In a way the situation is reminiscent of the English printing tradition of Geoffrey Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, who, as Orgel explains, 'continued to be archaic not through illustration but through typography'. ³⁴ Until the second half of the seventeenth century, Chaucer's collection of tales and fabliaux continued to be printed in an anachronistic Gothic black letter, perhaps in an attempt to reflect the medieval content of the work. Like the English

³³ Quilligan M., The Allegory of Female Authority: Christine de Pizan's Cité des dames (Ithaca – London: 1991) 29.

³⁴ Orgel, "Textual Icons" 68.

publishers, Perrault wanted to create an old book. Martin mentions some of the aspects that Perrault used to create the impression of a naïve and archaic book, such as the simple style, the lack of perspective and, in the case of "La Barbe bleue" (Bluebeard), the fact that the image is roughly divided in two parts by a wall.³⁵

Indeed, perspective is problematic or absent, for instance, in the engravings for "Sleeping Beauty", "Little Red Riding Hood" and "Bluebeard". But there is more. Medieval artists would commonly depict cities and individual buildings as too small for their inhabitants, as Alistair Fowler explained.³⁶ The 'disproportion' of figures is a notable aspect in medieval illuminations that must be attributed rather to convention than to inadequate skill, and this aspect can also be seen in Perrault's illustrations. Bluebeard and his wife, for instance, are astonishingly big compared to the wall they are standing next to [Fig. 3, 4]. Medieval artists often pay little attention to décor and background. Often the backgrounds are just a screen of colour that make the figures stand out more. According to Bland, medieval art is indeed rather an art of the significant gesture than of naturalistic representation.³⁷ Perrault seems to emphasize the gestures as well. Most images focus on two central figures represented in front of the scene, while the backgrounds for "Sleeping Beauty", "Little Red Riding Hood" and "The Fairies" have but little detail.

Bluebeard and Mélusine: Medieval Imagery Revisited

The illustrations for "Bluebeard" [Fig. 3, 4] contain medieval motifs such as knights and castles that also continued to be used in contemporary chapbooks. But these are not the only medieval characteristics. The composition of Perrault's image, which refers to various scenes of the tale, seems to go back to the pictorial tradition of the polyscenic picture or continuous narrative. Such images, representing various scenes of a story in one frame, were often created in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. According to Alistair Fowler, though, neoclassicist artists generally preferred monoscenic images and abandoned

³⁵ Martin, "L'illustration du contes des fées" 120.

³⁶ Fowler A., Renaissance Realism: Narrative Images in Literature and Art (Oxford: 2003) 2.

³⁷ Bland, A History of Book Illustration 56.

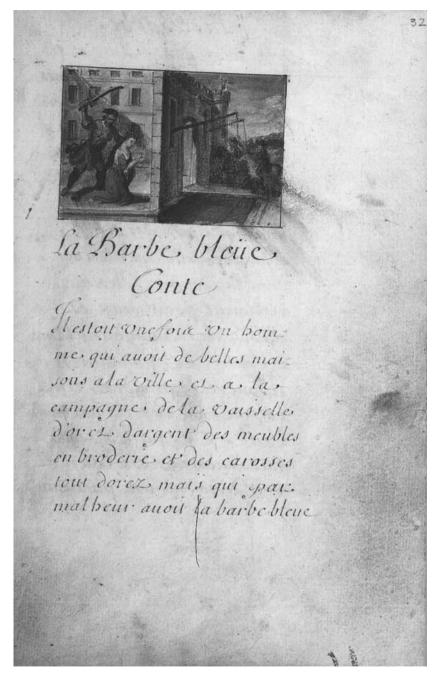


Fig. 3. [Col. Pl. VI] Bluebeard attacking his wife in the courtyard of his medieval castle. The naïve composition of this illustration for the tale "Bluebeard" is reminiscent of medieval art. From [Charles Perrault], *Contes de ma Mère l'Oye*, Anonymous manuscript (1695) 32. Pen and ink drawing coloured with gouache. New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, MA 1505.

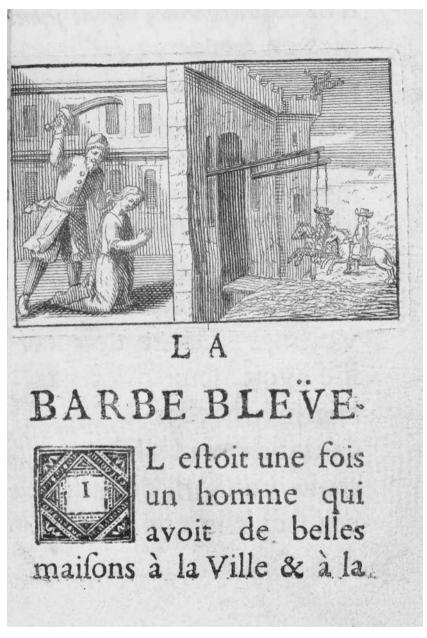


Fig. 4. A rustic copy of the manuscript. Illustration for the tale "Bluebeard". From Charles Perrault, *Histoires ou Contes du temps passé, avec des moralitéz* (Paris, Claude Barbin: 1697) 57. Copperplate engraving by Antoine Clouzier. Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France: Rés. P. Y₂ 263.

the continuous method of representation, as it contradicted the classical ideals of 'vraisemblance' and unity.³⁸ Another common aspect of medieval imagery is the use of cutaway walls, allowing the spectator a view of both the inside and the outside of a building. I will call this the 'voyeur perspective'.

The 'voyeur perspective' can be seen in one of the most frequently used illustrations of the tale Mélusine, first written by Jean d'Arras in 1393.39 The image depicts Raimondin looking through a hole he made in the door of the room where Mélusine, half woman and half serpent, is taking her Saturday bath. A painting by Guillebert de Mets representing this scene first appeared in Couldrette's illuminated manuscript around 1410. Like most illuminations in this manuscript, this image is polyscenic.⁴⁰ It refers to the discovery of Mélusine's secret as well as to the exile of Raimondin's brother who encouraged him to break his promise. Illustrations with similar compositions, combining polyscenic picturing and the 'voyeur perspective', are reused in almost all editions until the sixteenth and seventeenth century. One woodcut with a particularly interesting representation of this scene appeared in the edition published in Paris by Jean Trepperel around 1527 [Fig. 5], and was reused by the editors Nicolas Oudot and Jacques Febvre in the Bibliothèque bleue in 1660, 1677 and 1692.

This woodcut too makes use of both the continuous method and the 'voyeur perspective'. Besides the scene of Raimondin peeping through the hole in the door, a reference to another passage is added. Mélusine is not only depicted on the left while taking her bath, but also in the upper right corner as she flies away from the Lusignan castle after Raimondin has publicly called her a serpent. The image thus refers to several passages of the story. In the Bibliothèque bleue edition of

³⁸ Fowler, *Renaissance Realism* 23: 'Possibly the most decisive influence on changes in mimetic conventions was the classical ideal of unity. Once formulated as unities of time and place, this became accessible, and then irresistible. Simultaneous narrative was soon anathema. Shaftesbury anticipated Lessing in maintaining that visual arts must depict only single moments'.

³⁹ Harf-Lancner L., "L'Illustration du roman de Mélusine de Jean d'Arras dans les editions du XV^c et du XVI^c siècle", *Le livre et l'image en France au XVI^c siècle* (Paris: 1989) 29–55, for an overview of the scenes depicted in several manuscripts and early editions.

⁴⁰ Clier-Colombani F., *La fée Mélusine au Moyen Age: Images Mythes et Symboles* (Paris: 1991) 49, writes that this manuscript has the peculiarity of depicting twenty-one themes of the narrative in only fourteen illuminations. In some of the images the same character is represented twice.

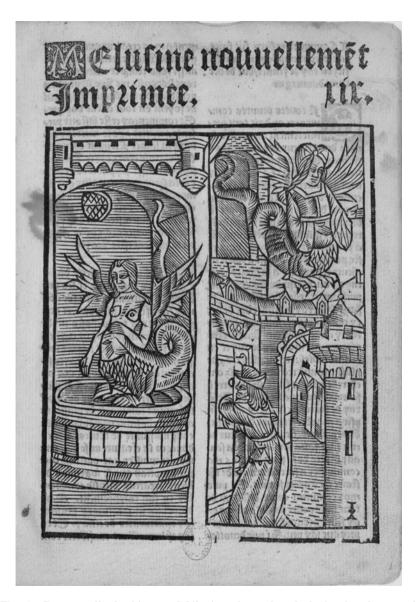


Fig. 5. Raymondin looking at Mélusine through a hole in the door and Mélusine flying away from Lusignan castle. An example of continuous narrative and 'voyeur perspective'. From Jean d'Arras, *Mélusine nouvellement imprimé* (Paris, Jean Trepperel: 1527–1532), frontispiece. Anonymous woodcut. Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France: Rés. P. Y₂ 2788.

1692, this woodcut is used three times, as a frontispiece on the cover of the book and twice illustrating the passages of the text to which the image refers.

When we now take another look at the images used in the manuscript and the first edition of Perrault's tale [Fig. 3, 4], we see that they too make use of the continuous method and the 'voyeur perspective'. The pictures are divided in a similar way, allowing the spectator a view of the courtyard as well as the outside of the castle. The different passages of Perrault's text that are referred to in the image are, of course, the scene of sister Anna looking out for her brothers, Bluebeard threatening his wife with his sword, and the brothers arriving just in time to save their sister.

Perrault was familiar with the editions of the Bibliothèque bleue, as can be concluded from the dedication letter 'À Monsieur ***' for his tale "Grisélidis". In this letter, Perrault refers to the low-priced editions with blue covers in which he found the popularized version of Giovanni Boccaccio's *Griselda*. As *Mélusine* is one of the few illustrated stories containing magical elements that was frequently published throughout the seventeenth century, ⁴¹ it is possible that Perrault had in mind the illustration of *Mélusine* when making or commissioning the gouache for the manuscript. This is especially likely because both stories contain similar themes. Raimondin and the heroine in Perrault's tale both violate a contract with their partner and they both look into a forbidden chamber to discover a secret that will destroy their marriage.

Another aspect of Perrault's image that seems to hint at the influence of the tale *Mélusine* is the presence of the castle. In the medieval story the castle is an important motif, as Mélusine is said to have constructed the castle of Lusignan. In Perrault's case, though, the images contradict the text of the first printed edition, as Bluebeard is described in the text as a rich financier rather than a member of the feudal nobility. The printed text only mentions Bluebeard's houses in

⁴¹ Andries L., "La 'Bibliothèque bleue' et la redécouverte des romans de chevalerie au XVIII^e siècle", in Damian-Grint P. (ed.), *Medievalism and 'manière gothique' in Enlightenment France* (Oxford: 2006) 54: 'Si c'est le Moyen Age de l'épopée qui domine dans la Bibliothèque bleue au dix-septième siècle, cela veut dire aussi que le parti pris de réalisme l'emporte sur la féerie et le merveilleux. On trouve effectivement peu de géants, de nains et de créatures fabuleuses dans les romans de chevalerie de la Bibliothèque bleue. Il en existe cependant quelques-uns comme la fée Mélusine, Obéron, roi de Féerie qui apparaît dans *Huon de Bordeaux* et le nain Pacolet, dans *Valentin et Orson* [...]'.

the city and in the countryside, whereas the image insists on a medieval castle with a tower, crenellated walls, a drawbridge and a moat. Catherine Velay-Vallantin also raises this problem and argues that the aristocratic symbols depicted in the image, foremost among them the castle, determine our reading of the tale:

[...] il reste que là où Perrault écrit 'maisons' nous lisons 'château', et de château, nous tirons 'seigneur' [...]. Une réponse existe à cette énigme dans l'iconographie des *Contes*, de l'image du manuscrit de 1695 à celle de l'édition de 1697. Le dessin colorié à la gouache de 1695 est divisé en son milieu par un mur figuré en coupe: à droite, ce mur s'allonge en un enceinte terminé par un tour [...]. A gauche il donne sur la cour intérieure d'un château. [...] en dépit des indications contraires du texte ces premiers témoignages iconographiques montrent bien que dès les premiers lectures du conte, le graveur et le lecteur voient un 'château' qui n'existe pas: le processus de 'seigneuralisation' de Barbe-Bleue est amorcé. [...]. Les éditions successives, lettrées ou bien de la Bibliothèque bleue, reproduisent ce contresens, et les illustrateurs romantiques comme Doré et Grandville accentuent les aspects féodaux du personnage.⁴²

The result is a stereotype image of Bluebeard as an aristocrat that persists in the mind of the reader today, despite the fact that his social status remains ambiguous in the text.

This hypothesis, however, does not explain the appearance of a castle in the gouache. When comparing the text of Barbin's first printed edition with the manuscript, one notices that the word 'château' does appear once in the manuscript, whereas the word has disappeared in the printed version. The French word 'château' can be interpreted as 'luxurious house' as well as 'castle'. But other passages of the tale (evoking sister Anna looking out over a panoramic landscape and her brothers entering through the 'door' on horseback) and the fact that the word has been omitted seem to indicate that it was interpreted as castle within this context. The 'contresens' mentioned by Velay-Vallantin would only arise in the Barbin edition. It seems to me that the reference to the castle in the text of the manuscript, combined with the influence of the medieval tale *Mélusine*, helps to explain the presence of the castle in the gouache.

The illustrations for "Bluebeard" can be connected with the medieval pictorial tradition as exemplified by the tale *Mélusine*. Indeed, a striking continuity can be seen in the illustrated editions of this medi-

 $^{^{42}}$ Velay-Vallantin C., "Barbe-Bleue: Le dit, l'écrit et le représenté", $\it Romantisme~78~(1992)~80–81.$

eval story published between 1410 and 1692. The pictorial tradition seems to be carried on in the illustrations for Perrault's tale, to the extent that the castle in Clouzier's engraving seems to contradict the text of the first printed edition. The social status of Bluebeard remains ambiguous in this printed text, as the word 'castle' has disappeared. The castle, which was copied from the gouache into the engraving, suggests he was a feudal lord, and sparks off a tradition of medievalist readings of the tale.

Fokke, Sève and Marillier: Toward Another 'Once Upon a Time'

Perrault emphasized popular and medievalist aspects in both the text and the illustrations of his fairy tale collection to create a contrast with classicism. Whereas Clouzier's engravings were reused or copied in many eighteenth-century editions, some publishers added new illustrations that fitted in with the classicist style. At first sight, the illustrations by Simon Fokke (1712–1784) and Jacques de Sève (†1788) in the Perrault edition published by Coustellier in 1742 seem to conform to the classicist tradition so contrary to Perrault's idea. Martin notes the timeless and almost classicist clothing of the storyteller and her audience in the frontispiece. A closer analysis of Fokke's images, however, reveals that the medievalist aspects have not entirely disappeared. Fokke might even have attempted to create another 'Once upon a time' using a new approach which could very well have been inspired by the text of the tales themselves.

Despite the general artistic trend to represent unified scenes, the Dutch engraver Simon Fokke and the French painter Jacques de Sève reused the continuous narrative, creating several illustrations that refer to more than one passage. The composition of the engraving for "Bluebeard" [Fig. 6] is similar to the images from the manuscript and the Barbin edition. The image refers to the same passages of the text. However, it is less violent, as the angry husband is no longer waving

⁴³ The illustrations by Fokke and Sève were reused in numerous editions, amongst which the Dutch bilingual edition for children published by Pierre van Os, Contes de ma Mère l'Oye/Vertellingen van Moeder de Gans. Met negen keurlyke koopere plaatjes. Zeer dienstig voor de jeugdt om haar zelve in het Fransch en Hollands te oeffenen (with nine pretty copperplates. Very useful for children to practise their French and Dutch. The Hague: 1754).

⁴⁴ Martin, "L'illustration du conte de fées" 127.

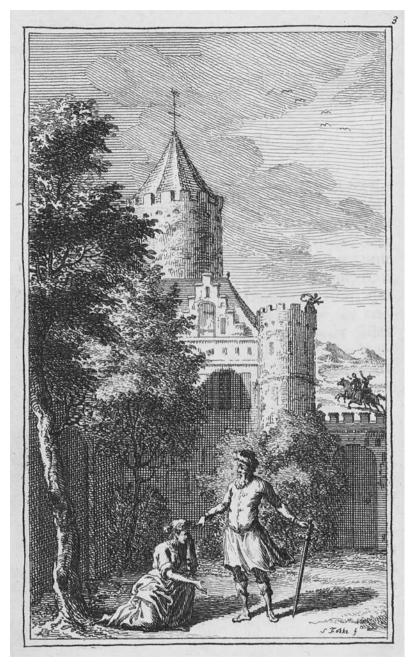


Fig. 6. Bluebeard and his wife in front of a medieval castle. A less naïve illustration for the tale "Bluebeard". From Charles Perrault, *Contes de ma Mère l' Oye/ Vertellingen van Moeder de Gans* [...] (The Hague, Pierre van Os: 1754), opposite page 19. Copperplate engraving by Jacques de Sève and Simon Fokke. The Hague, Koninklijke Bibliotheek: NOM N 40.

his sword above his head. The naïve aspect is diminished by the fact that the image is no longer divided in two parts and the cutaway wall has disappeared. Furthermore, the proportion of the figures is more realistic when compared to the size of the castle. The tower and crenellated walls, though, clearly refer to medieval times.

Other illustrations, too, combine allusions to various scenes of the narrative. The first illustrations for "Sleeping Beauty" represent the main figures: the princess (who is not even sleeping) and the prince sitting at her bedside. Fokke and Sève added a forest and sleeping figures evoking the events that led to the magical slumber, whereas the prince, who has just entered the room, heralds the second part and the happy ending. The illustrators added elements to the scene that help identify the protagonists and hint at the abrupt start and the duration of the spell: a method that would be further developed by Gustave Doré, in his famous nineteenth-century illustrations, to which he added not only sleeping servants and guards, but also giant cobwebs in the palace and thorn bushes growing into Sleeping Beauty's bedroom to suggest the passage of a hundred years' time.

The image for the tale "Le chat botté" (Puss in Boots) [Fig. 7] also summarizes the whole story. At the back, the windmill and the man with the donkey evoke the opening scene during which the inheritance is divided between the three sons; the carriage being driven along the riverside refers to the tour of the king, the princess and the faux-marquis; the façade represented at the front announces the Ogre's castle, which the clever cat will obtain for his master. This façade with its columns and balcony suggests the classicist style, whereas Bluebeard's castle recalls medieval architecture. The result is a mix of styles evoking various periods.

The mix of styles is even more evident in the illustrations Fokke made (alone this time) for several tales by D'Aulnoy that were published by Marc Michel Rey in the collection entitled *Le cabinet des fées* (1754–1773). The illustration for "La Belle aux cheveux d'or" (The Beauty with the Golden Hair) represents the final scene, during which the princess crowns the valiant servant Avenant king [Fig. 8]. The broken chains on the floor and the tower that can be seen through the window bring to memory the two passages of the tale during which Avenant was imprisoned. The medieval tower contrasts with the columns of the classicist interior. Fokke's illustration for the tale "Babiole" is interesting because it represents the medieval motif of the tournament, whereas Clouzier's illustration represents the queen and the protagonist Babiole in a classicist setting with columns and



Fig. 7. The windmill, the carriage and the farmer evoke different passages of the tale. Illustration for "Puss in Boots". From Charles Perrault, *Contes de ma Mère l' Oye/ Vertellingen van Moeder de Gans* [...] (The Hague, Pierre van Os: 1754), opposite page 65. Copperplate engraving by Jacques de Sève and Simon Fokke.

The Hague, Koninklijke Bibliotheek: NOM N 40.



Fig. 8. The princess crowns Avenant king. The décor contains a mixture of architectural styles. Illustration for Marie-Catherine d'Aulnoy's tale "The Beauty with the Golden Hair". From *Le cabinet des fées* [...] 8 vols. (Amsterdam, Marc Michel Rey: 1754–1773) III, opposite page 58. Copperplate engraving by Simon Fokke. The Hague, Koninklijke Bibliotheek: 1746 C 122–129.

draperies. The French illustrator clearly avoided representing medieval motifs.

Although Francois Pupil writes that medieval architecture was still omnipresent in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and that cities were a blend of different styles and periods,⁴⁵ it seems to me that Fokke's fairy tale illustrations are not a mere imitation of reality. This is borne out by the fact that Fokke also illustrated a series of Dutch history books written by Jan Wagenaar. The analysis of the images in this collection by Eveline Koolhaas-Grosfeld shows that Fokke was usually well-documented when it comes to details in décor.⁴⁶ It is therefore unlikely that he used various styles by accident. Instead, they seem to be added deliberately to correspond to the contradictory elements in the text of the tales.

Through a mix of styles, Fokke seems to have created a fantasy period. This timeless fairyland might even be an attempt to introduce elements of magic into the fairy tale imagery, an aspect that, except for the conventional cloud signifying the border between reality and the other world, 47 is unusual in eighteenth-century fairy tale illustrations. This would also explain why the rare magical motifs in Clouzier's illustrations, such as the magic wand of Percinet and the disproportion between the ogre and Hop-o'-My-Tumb⁴⁸ are reinforced in Fokke's engravings. The illustration for "Gracieuse et Percinet" represents one of the most magical passages of the tale: Percinet invites the princess for a tour in his carriage drawn by deer. In accordance with the text, the forest is illuminated with candles, shepherds are dancing, and the crystal palace can be seen through the thick forest [Fig. 9]. As for the ogre in "Hop-o'-My-Thumb", he seems even bigger and wears a pirate-like outfit and a sword with a skull-shaped hilt. Behind the usual scene of Hop-o'-My-Thumb pulling the magic boots, small houses and figures can be seen.

Fokke does not, however, depict medieval dress. In the English editions, by contrast, attention is paid to both costume and décor. The

⁴⁵ Pupil, Le Style Troubadour 36.

⁴⁶ Koolhaas-Grosfeld E., "De bril van Simon Fokke en Jan Wagenaar. Het ontstaan van de vaderlandsche geschiedenis in de achttiende eeuw", *Kunstschrift* 3 (2004) 8–15.

⁴⁷ Stewart P., "Images de ce qui ne fut jamais", *Le conte merveilleux au XVIII^e siècle* (Paris: 2002) 373.

⁴⁸ Martin, "L'illustration du contes de fées" 118, also mentions these magical aspects.



Fig. 9. A ride through the enchanted forest. Illustration for Marie-Catherine d'Aulnoy's tale "Graciosa and Percinet". From *Le cabinet des fées* [...], 8 vols. (Amsterdam, Marc Michel Rey: 1754–1773) III, opposite page 17. Copperplate engraving by Simon Fokke. The Hague, Koninklijke Bibliotheek: 1746 C 122–129.

first surviving illustrated edition of D'Aulnoy's tales published in England is entitled The Diverting Works of the Countess D'Anois and was published by John Nicholson in 1715. The collection contains nine tales by D'Aulnoy that are illustrated with one or two vignettes each. The vignette illustrating the tale of "The Beauty with the Golden Hair" represents Avenant and the giant fighting. Behind them a Gothic castle can be seen. The illustrations for "Graciosa and Percinet" [Fig. 10] depict Grognon wearing a stiff lace collar and a ceremonial dress with a tight-laced bodice, whereas the king wears an ermine cloak, a crown and a necklace with precious stones. Percinet wears padded trunk hose. The costumes resemble the Spanish dress of the sixteenth and early seventeenth century rather than medieval costumes, but according to Pupil, who has analysed medievalism in eighteenth-century painting, Spanish clothing can be seen as an eighteenth-century attempt to create a medieval setting, as Pupil writes on the subject of the descriptions of medieval dress in Jean Baptiste de la Curne de Sainte-Palaye's Mémoires sur l'ancienne chevalerie (1759):

Les peintres des personnages 'espagnols' avaient effectivement doté leurs figures rétrospectives de cette parure. La hiérarchie des matières et des couleurs, la valeur du 'Manteau d'honneur' fait d'écarlate et de four-rure, toutes ces informations pittoresques ont pu aider à représenter le Moyen Age d'une manière vivante. L'attention portée à l'aspect matériel des choses et le désir de flatter le regard ont été curieusement associés à l'étude d'un passé différent de celui des classiques. Au moment où l'avènement du néo-classicisme a promu des oeuvres au style dépouillé et aux couleurs froides, l'idée du Moyen Age s'est donc enrichie d'images animées et colorées. 49

In two subsequent English editions of D'Aulnoy's tales, entitled *Queen Mab* (London, J. Dodsley: 1770 and London, Vernor & Hood: 1799), various visual interpretations of fairyland can be perceived. Although they are almost identical in composition, the two images illustrating the tale "The Good Little Mouse" make use of different pictorial motifs. A crenellated wall, arrowslits and an old chair create a Gothic setting in the illustration from 1770. The women, however, wear eighteenth-century dresses with lace cuffs and ribbons. In the image from 1799, the chair is modernized and the arrowslits have disappeared, but the dresses betray a hint of medieval fashion, as they have sleeves that

⁴⁹ Pupil, Le Style Troubadour 57.



Fig. 10. The small vignettes representing scenes from the tales "Graciosa and Percinet", "The Beauty with the Golden Hair" and "The Bluebird" betray an increased attention for costume. From Marie-Catherine d'Aulnoy, *The Diverting Works of the Countess D'Anois* (London, John Nicolson[sic]: 1715), opposite page 369. Anonymous engraving. © British Library Board. All rights reserved. C.115.n.12.

widen towards the wrist. The women also wear small steepled hats with a long veil typical of fourteenth- and fifteenth-century dress.

As a consequence of the success of the novels and adaptations of medieval romances by Louis-Elisabeth de la Vergne, comte de Tressan (1705–1783), in the 1780s, French artists multiplied the medievalist elements in their illustrations, giving rise to a new style, namely the 'style troubadour'. Both Pupil and René Lanson mention the French illustrator Clément Pierre Marillier (1740–1808), whose illustration for *Le Petit Jehan de Saintré* (1788) is one of the best examples of this troubadour style. ⁵⁰ Lanson comments on Marillier's illustration for this text and he considers it a relatively realistic representation of the medieval, writing:

La scène du Petit Jéhan Saintré aux pieds de la dame des Belles Cousines était déjà remarquable par *l'exactitude* de certains détails: casque serrée à la taille, pantalon collant et souliers à la poulaine du page, coiffure de la femme en sorte de hennin, boiseries gothiques, tentures fleurdelisées, bahut ancien surmonté d'un triptyque.⁵¹

Significantly, Marillier also illustrated the forty-volume collection of fairy tales, *Le cabinet des fées* (1785–1789). The illustration for the tale "Les Chevaliers errants" (The Wandering Knights), written by another French fairy tale-author, Louise de Bossigny, comtesse d'Auneuil, represents a medieval castle and a knight in shining amour, wearing a diagonal scarf, which, according to Pupil, was part of medieval dress, as perceived by eighteenth-century readers and viewers. Marillier thus created a relatively realistic representation of a medieval knight and a castle for D'Auneuil's tale that is explicitly set in the Middle Ages.

Marillier's image illustrating the tale of "La Barbe bleue", however, is more mixed [Fig. 11]. The composition is obviously inspired by the engravings by Clouzier and Fokke that we have seen earlier, but the image refers to fewer passages, as the brothers have disappeared. In keeping with the artistic spirit of his time, Marillier created a more unified and less naïve illustration. However, like his Dutch colleague Fokke, the French illustrator combined medieval motifs such as the tower and the crenellated wall, with classicist architectural ele-

Pupil F., "L'influence des thèmes médiévaux sur les arts graphiques", in Damian-Grint P. (ed.), Medievalism and 'manière gothique' in Enlightenment France (Oxford: 2006) 233.
 Lanson R., Le goût du Moyen Age en France au XVIIIe siècle (Paris – Brussels: 1926) 47.



Fig. 11. Bluebeard and his wife. The décor contains a mixture of architectural styles. Illustration for the tale "Bluebeard". From *Le cabinet des fées* [...]. 41 vols. (Amsterdam – Paris, le chevalier Charles-Joseph de Mayer: 1785–1786) I, opposite page 15. Copperplate engraving by Clément-Pierre Marillier and Emmanuel de Ghendt. The Hague, Koninklijke Bibliotheek: B:184 G1.

ments such as the façade, creating a fantasy setting that reflects the multifaceted décor described in the text.

Conclusion

As we have seen, authors and illustrators of fairy tales made use of the medieval in various ways. Perrault, a champion of the Moderns, deliberately added naïve elements to his gouaches to enhance the popular and anti-classicist character of his fairy tale collection. Like the text of his tales, the illustrations were a tool he used in the 'Querelle des Anciens et des Modernes'. Elements reminiscent of the medieval pictorial tradition appear most clearly in his frontispiece and the illustration for the tale "Bluebeard".

In the eighteenth century, the naïve style and composition typical of Perrault's illustrations disappear. The proportion of the figures becomes more realistic and walls no longer divide the illustrations for "Bluebeard" in two scenes. More detail and depth is added to the décor. Yet, the medievalist elements do not disappear altogether. Towers and crenellated walls continue to be used and more attention is paid to medieval dress, but illustrators use the medieval matter not so much to create the naïve, archaic ambiance captured in Perrault's manuscript and first edition, but to evoke a magical setting, a fairyland.

The various, anachronistic pictorial motifs added to fairy tale illustrations by the anonymous English illustrators might indicate their quest for a consistent décor. The mixture of different styles and periods in the illustrations by Fokke and Marillier, on the other hand, is probably intentional. Both illustrators created more realistic representations of medieval times for other texts. In their fairy tale illustrations, the artists seem to have deliberately mixed different styles. These images, in fact, seem to reflect the contradictory elements in the text.

Although medieval elements are used in many of the illustrations discussed here, the question remains whether or not this is medievalism. In my opinion, Perrault's attempt to emulate the style of medieval imagery comes closest, as it betrays a real interest in medieval and popular culture. Fokke and Marillier probably had a similar interest in the medieval, as they were able to create consistent representations of the past for other books. In their fairy tale illustrations, however, 'Once upon a time' became a fantasy period of which the medieval was but one marvellous aspect.

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A FAIRY TROUBADOUR? MEDIEVAL MATTER AND THE 'BON VIEUX TEMPS' IN WOMEN'S FAIRY TALES (1730–1750)

Aurélie Zygel-Basso

The use and image of medieval matter in French fairy tales evolved significantly during the years 1730-1750. This evolution also reflects the parallel development of a more scholarly and professional interest in the past. Medieval Studies then became a field in its own right and entered the debate on the role of antiquités gauloises in national literary history. When women's fairy tales were enjoying a second high point circa 1730,2 they focussed on a few commonplace themes borrowed from the Middle Ages - often implicitly understood at the time as a period extending to the Renaissance – and operas from the time of the conteuses, which centred on the figure of the enchantress. At first glance, these movements based on a return to the Middle Ages proceeded from a scholarly point of view or called for an adherence to the imagination and the larger nostalgia for distant times: 'Scholarship and entertainment took turns keeping alive public interest'. How exactly did this process work and how was it manifested in fairy texts? Those tales, because they enjoyed a liberating minor genre status – anything was possible in such stories – worked as an aesthetic laboratory at the time. Therefore, choosing them to study the alternation between scholarly and imaginative motivations allows us to show an unofficial yet widespread evolution in readers' and writers' visions of the past. We would like to explore their 'fairy troubadour' aesthetic, which antedates and announces the 'style troubadour' of the 1780s.

¹ See Damian-Grint P. (ed.), Medievalism and 'manière gothique' in Enlightenment France (Oxford: 2006), and Montoya A.C., "D'un Amadis à l'autre. Anciens et Modernes devant la littérature médiévale, 1684–1750", in Coignard T. – Davis P. – Montoya A. (eds.), Lumières et histoire / Enlightenment and History (Paris: 2010) 135–153.

² The first one taking place c. 1690–1715.

³ Diu I. – Parinet E., "Introduction", in Diu I. – Parinet E. – Vielliard F. (eds.), *Mémoire des chevaliers. Édition, diffusion et réception des romans de chevalerie du XVII^e au XX^e siècle (Paris: 2007) 6. All translations from the French are my own.*

The two worlds – scholarship an imagination – appear to be on virtually opposite sides of a clear divide between two kinds of Middle Ages, the first one being collected as the subject matter of history, and the other received as the crucible of memory.⁴ A brief look shows that, unlike those scholars seeking to find in it a body of proofs,⁵ medieval literature, among the heralds of imagination, is called upon and cherished because of the temporal depth it then brings to modern writing. This divide raises one major difficulty.

On the one hand, is it even possible to compare rereadings of the past in scholarly works, popularisations, anthologies and fairy tales? On the other hand, when drawing such lines between genres, one runs the risk of a sterile 'traditional approach, above all generic'. Jelle Koopmans uses that expression to distinguish between the contents of the *chanson de geste*, chivalric romances and their adaptations; however the expression also shows the danger of studying the eighteenth-century fascination with the Middle Ages in an overly compartmentalised fashion. Despite the various degrees of scholarship in literary works, and the more or less ornamental role of medieval matter in fiction, it is difficult to imagine the 'belles-lettres' connoisseur of the 1750s as a reader torn between two approaches. Thanks to works like those of Helwi Blom, we know that copies of the *Bibliothèque bleue*, Gothic editions, medieval manuscripts, historical works and more modern novels could all be found side by side on the same library shelves.

I wish to argue, therefore, that the aforementioned divide has more to do with diverse aesthetic viewpoints than with historical references of varying accuracy, since the notion of *authenticity* in the eighteenth century is far removed from our contemporary notion. Although what

⁴ Jean-Marc Chatelain uses that distinction about the eighteenth century, particularly with reference to the etymologist Gilles Ménage as well as La Fontaine when he praises the 'vieux langage'. That distinction still appeared valid during the first half of the eighteenth century. See Chatelain J.-M., "De l'errance à la hantise: la survivance des chevaliers aux XVII^c et XVIII^c siècles", in Diu – Parinet – Vielliard, *Mémoire des chevaliers* 36.

⁵ Chatelain J.-M., "De l'errance à la hantise: la survivance des chevaliers aux XVII° et XVIII° siècles", in Diu – Parinet – Vielliard, *Mémoire des chevaliers* 36.

⁶ Koopmans J., "Quand les chevaliers se mettent à chanter: l'opéra devant la tradition narrative médiévale", in Diu – Parinet – Vielliard, *Mémoire des chevaliers* 221.

⁷ Blom H., "La présence des romans de chevalerie dans les bibliothèques privées des XVIII^e et XVIII^e siècles", in Delcourt T. – Parinet É. (eds.), *La bibliothèque bleue et les littératures de colportage* (Paris: 2000) 51–67.

would later be called the Middle Ages may be just another exotic device,8 exotic in time rather than space in both kinds of works, the exotisms are not the same. Some scholarly texts reproach fiction its lack of coherence in staging the past; the former clearly seem to despise the latter, although they seldom feel the need to be explicit. For instance, when the abbé Laugier comments on Sainte Clotilde en prière au pied du tombeau de saint Martin, a painting by Van Loo (1753), he dwells upon its lack of historical realism, arguing that the Gothic architecture surrounding the saint 'n'étoit point connu[e] du tems de sainte Clotilde'9 (was not yet known in the time of Saint Clotilde) and her antique sarcophagus was not 'convenable' (suitable). The Histoire de France by the père Daniel (first edition 1696) was repeatedly illustrated under Louis XV. One of its best known series of engravings is by Bernard Picart (1722), with different temporal characters depending on the periods evoked. Indeed, these historical publications tend to display a diachronical perspective with more marked distinctions, like the aforementioned Histoire de France, or Président Hénault's Abrégé chronologique de l'Histoire de France with engravings by Cochin. Such projects aim to underscore the differences between historical time periods, whereas novels, tales and most paintings of fantasy tend to blur them. Still, the otherness characteristic of ancient works is common to both types of works, although it does not play the same role in them. A rediscovered past evolved as scholarly works became better known and acquired more influence in the public sphere, contributing to a renewed aesthetics and a moral perspective in the fairy tale as a genre at a time when it had reached a turning point.

Furthermore, as we shall see later, the growing interest in medieval times, nurtured for the most part by male scholars, was hailed and transformed by women's patronage of the aristocratic, neo-epicurean *salon. Salon* values, viewed as feminine, are vividly reflected in fairy tales because women fiction writers in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries appeared to claim affinities with the genre.¹⁰

⁸ 'Exotic' then should be read in its strong, etymological sense of 'distant'.

Laugier Marc-Antoine, Jugement d'un amateur sur l'exposition des tableaux (Paris, Nicolas-Bonaventure Duchesne: 1753) v, 59, 196–198.
 See Jones Day S., "Madame d'Aulnoy's Julie: A Heroine of the 1690s", in Writers

¹⁰ See Jones Day S., "Madame d'Aulnoy's Julie: A Heroine of the 1690s", in Writers and Heroines: Essays on Women in French Literature (Bern – Berlin – Frankfurt – New York – Paris – Vienna: 1999), and The Search for Lyonnesse: Women's Fiction in France 1670–1703 (Bern – Berlin – Brussels – Frankfurt – New York – Vienna: 1999). On the subject of women's education, see also Astbury K., "La femme amoureuse et le conte moral des

Fantasy and Scholarship: Two Parallel Movements?

Although the term 'Middle Ages' is found in seventeenth-century dictionaries, it did not come into widespread use until the following century. The less specific 'bon vieux temps' was often employed throughout the eighteenth century. And indeed, retrospective art was not at all limited to the medieval era as it would later be defined. Painters, for instance, felt free to depict subjects from Clovis to Rubens-like 'Spanish' scenes, not to mention the Valois family and the life of Henri IV.

As for historical works in general, one notices a shift from ecclesiastical scholarship to a broader national perspective. The *Recueil des historiens des Gaules et de la France*, supported by the Chancelier d'Aguesseau (1668–1751, an honorary member of the Académie des Sciences), was continued by the Maurists in 1711. These Benedictine monastic historiographers, Jean Mabillon (1632–1707) among them, believed in the importance of study and, especially, in text-critical editions of medieval texts, with a view to making written tradition, otherwise too obscure, accessible to readers. The first volume was published in 1727 under the direction of Dom Bouquet. Dom Antoine Rivet began publication of the *Histoire littéraire de la France* in 1734. The *Ordonnances des rois de France* (diplomatic documents) were assembled by historians and paleographers Louis-Georges de Bréquigny (1714–1795) and, later, Gabriel La Porte du Theil (1742–1815), among others. All of these were scholarly works for limited distribution.

There is little doubt, however, that subsequent to the editions of historical texts, the first scholarly editions of medieval novels or poetry by poets like Villon paved the way for what has been termed the 'troubadour' aesthetic¹¹ at the end of the century. By the 1780s, visions of the past had evolved into a notion of national heritage that foreshadowed nineteenth and twentieth-century perspectives. The concept of the Museum had emerged and anthologies of many kinds abounded.

femmes écrivains: vers un conte moral 'féminin'?", in Dijk S. van – Strien-Chardonneau M. van (cds.), Féminités et masculinités dans le texte narratif avant 1800: la question du 'gender'. Actes du XIV* Colloque de la SATOR (Louvain: 2002) 349–361.

¹¹ See Mancini M., "Il Medioevo del Settecento: 'philosophes', antiquari, 'genre troubadour'", in Lo spazio: Il medioevo volgare, vol. III (Rome: 2003) 595–624, and part 5 "La riscoperta dei testi medievali" 609–613. See, among others, Jacoubet H., Le comte de Tressan et les origines du genre troubadour (Paris: 1923), and Le Genre troubadour et les origines françaises du romantisme (Paris: 1929).

Texts were now offered 'in full awareness of their belonging to the past [...]: they were to be read as semiophors according to Krzystof Pomian [...], considered from the "distance of times gone by" and chosen [...] because of that distance'. 12 This distance did not yet exist between the tales under discussion as a whole and their readers or authors; one finds in these texts, however, two ways of conceiving the past. The first¹³ has already been described; the second is more immediate and calls for a certain semantic or aesthetic assent on the part of the reader, which I will show later on. Accordingly, we will be able to reject an overly simplistic opposition between fictional and scholarly writings insofar as they both develop diverse ways of reading within the same public. There are indeed several views of the past in the scholarly works and fiction of the eighteenth century. However, neither category of work includes a perspective that contradicts the unique perspective of the other (fiction versus works of scholarship). On the contrary, both comprise multiple medievalisms, and at times even share a common one.

As for the 'distant' approach, a playful, ironical relationship with the 'bon vieux temps' was already being observed in seventeenth-century court ballets, literary games and serious treatises. Chapelain's dialogue De la lecture des vieux romans¹⁴ underscores, in older texts, their radical otherness and their absolute distance from modern aesthetics.¹⁵ In the mid-eighteenth century, this free relationship with medieval sources evolved into pastiche and a language 'archaising rather than archaic [...], intended for a contemporary audience as proof of modern authorial intervention [...], a type of writing aimed at recreation, not re-creation'. ¹⁶

At the same time, however, a eulogistic rediscovery of the Middle Ages began with a crucial and widespread scholarly text, *Mémoire sur les fabliaux* (1746, published 1753), by the antiquarian and medieval scholar, the Count of Caylus (1692–1765). It redefines classical tales by

¹² Chatelain, "De l'errance à la hantise" 37.

¹³ The past seen from an explicit distance and approached because of it.

¹⁴ Chatelain, "De l'errance à la hantise" 46–47.

¹⁵ Ibid.

Glencross M., "Relic and Romance: Antiquarianism and Medievalism in French Literary Culture, 1780–1830", Modern Language Review 95 (2000) 337–349 (my emphasis).

comparing them with medieval stories.¹⁷ Nicholas Cronk shows how dictionary entries for 'fabliau' evolved in the Dictionnaire de Trévoux and the *Encyclopédie* subsequent to Caylus's lecture, as they tended to quote his definition. 18 Caylus also inspired other scholars – Étienne Barbazan, for example – to publish collections of *Fabliaux* in the 1750s. His own fiction writings, like Les Manteaux (1746), were inspired by his studies. They sought to avoid the ornamental style of feminine tales, idealising instead medieval simplicité, naïveté and goût vrai. 19 Thus, in Caylus's view, French fabliaux play the double role of celebrating 'national antiquities' and demonstrating how to write – and how not to write – fiction. Caylus would have judged most of the ornaments in our corpus severely indeed, as he despised them; but the tales' medievalism was in fact a more contemporary and comprehensive one than the Count's, their public and values being also different. A few conteuses, like Mlle de Lubert, however, were familiar with his work²⁰ and launched a slightly different style in those same years, as we will discuss later on.

The Count's definition was written in the midst of a retrospective craze, a renewed interest among bibliophiles and among what was not yet called 'the public' in the eighteenth-century sense of the word.²¹ This interest can be seen through their presence in Lenglet-Dufresnoy's classification *La Bibliothèque des romans*,²² published with *De l'Usage des romans* (1734). Lenglet-Dufresnoy devotes some fifty pages to chivalric romances, and published a very successful *Roman de la Rose* in 1735. Later readers enjoyed anthologies like the famous *Bibliothèque des dames*, the *Bibliothèque universelle des romans* and the *Bibliothèque bleue*'s many editions (the latter started publishing older texts in the seventeenth century, with considerable success throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries). Chivalry novels multiplied in the private collections of bibliophiles such as Jean-Pierre Imbert Châtre

¹⁷ Caylus Anne-Claude-Philippe de Tubières comte de, *Mémoires de littérature, tirés des registres de l'Académie royale des Inscriptions et belles-lettres* 20 (Paris, Imprimerie royale: 1753) 352–376.

¹⁸ Cronk N., "Les 'Mémoires sur les fabliaux' de Caylus", in Damian-Grint, *Medievalism and 'manière gothique'* 237–257; Cronk N. – Peeters K., *Le Comte de Caylus, les arts et les lettres* (Amsterdam: 2004); Caylus, *Contes*, ed. J. Boch (Paris: 2005).

¹⁹ Ibid. 255.

²⁰ Through her friend Mme de Graffigny and Mlle Quinault's salon, the 'Bout-dubanc' society, where other writers like Voltaire, Marivaux and Duclos were invited.

²¹ About the difference between seventeenth- and eighteenth-century notions of the public, see Merlin-Kajman H., *Public et littérature en France au XVIIf siècle* (Paris: 1994). ²² Including 'Romans de chevalerie' and 'Romans antiques en vers françois'.

de Cangé, who sold his book *cabinet* to the Royal Library in 1733, or Denis Guyon de Sardière, whose collection was sold in 1760.²³ In the previous century, book collecting had already become both an aesthetic and scholarly activity. Mid-eighteenth century fairy tale writers, furthermore, imbued their fiction with the strange quality of the past through rewritings, titles with a medieval flavour or the use of an archaic lexicon. In so doing, they followed a path laid out some fifty years before by the first women fairy tales authors.

Tale writers like Aulnoy and Lhéritier were already playing with the age of chivalry. The latter's aim, as Alicia Montoya has shown,²⁴ was to link the *conteuses* to *antiquités gauloises* and a feminine tradition. In this context, fairy tales in the 1690s were part of 'a new constellation linking the novel as a genre both to its medieval heritage and to popular culture, while investing the paradigm of its origins with a hitherto unknown connotation of rusticity and originality'.²⁵ Women writers in the 1740s would lay claim to those origins as they incorporated the past into their texts using various strategies that included direct allusions, gallant amalgams²⁶ or a recreation of their sources.

Medieval Matter and the Conteuses. An Amalgam Aesthetic

In 1740, women authors, like their predecessors, used medieval elements in the fairy universe they knew so well. Mme de Gomez, in 1722, evoked the mythical *Gaules* and alluded to Portuguese dynasties in *L'histoire de Jean de Calais*; Marguerite de Lussan achieved some

²³ See Chatelain, "De l'errance à la hantise" 45, note 23.

²⁴ Montoya A.C., "Contes du style des troubadours. The Memory of the Medieval in 17th-century French Fairy Tales", *Studies in Medievalism* 16 (2008) 1–24, shows the importance of Mlle Lhéritier's pioneer work. She contributed to the creation of evolving taste in the 1740s by linking the troubadours' idealised work to a specifically feminine production in the preface to the *Enchantements de l'Eloquence*. As Lintot and/or Prévost did later in their preface to the 1735 tales, Lhéritier imbued the Middle Ages with a classical moral dimension, not without a certain irony. The comtesse d'Auneuil in *Les chevaliers errans* (1709) was guided by the same inspiration, although less specifically. The works of these women constitute a cornerstone of the genre.

²⁵ Wolfzettel F., "Ces vieux fatras: Moyen Âge et folklore au XVII^c siècle", Médiévales 23 (2002) 213, cited in Vielliard, "Qu'est-ce que le 'roman de chevalerie?" 28.

²⁶ Amalgams due to their nostalgia for seventeenth-century salons, with their socalled *galant* novels or poetry and their feminine values, including the *sentiment* Mlle Falques mentioned in her preface (see next page). *Sentiment* then was linked with an idealized model of love and its expression.

renown with the publication of her Anecdotes de la cour de Philippe Auguste (1733–1738), whose style, as the touching story of Gabrielle de Vergy unfolds, resembles that of Mme de Lafavette. Lussan went on to produce Anecdotes de la cour de Chilpéric (1736), Anecdotes de la cour de François I^{er} (1748) (dedicated to Mme de Pompadour and with a merely ornamental Renaissance setting), then Marie d'Angleterre (1749) and Histoire du règne de Louis XI (1755).²⁷ In 1737, Mme Durand wrote Mémoires de la Cour de Charles VII; Mme de Tencin's Mémoires du comte de Comminges (1737) show Adélaïde's death in the arms of Comminges, an episode that would inspire the works of Baculard d'Arnaud, which, according to Laurent Versini, belong to the French roman noir tradition. By the turn of the century, the production of troubadour tales like these had become a veritable industry. Mme Riccoboni, for example, wrote about her own contribution to the Bibliothèque universelle des romans as follows: 'I make up old stories [...] that appear to come from very old manuscripts [...]. This occupation is reasonably profitable and amuses me'.28 But such novels or pseudo-historical narratives29 remained outside the fairy tale genre.

When the *conteuses* contemplated 'old stories', they tended to polish, mix and mingle them, creating a specific fairy-tale tone for all, which is precisely what Caylus disdained. 'Far away' often meant 'once upon a time', as long as cultural distance made it possible to rewrite sources. This exotic medievalism goes beyond Western culture and includes oriental sources, ³⁰ as shown by the case of Mlle Falques. In the preface to her *Contes du sérail, traduits du turc* (1753), she explicitly postulates the softening of a harsh bygone era, whether this was the Gallic or Turkish past, as we can read below. She then invokes the model of the *salon* presided over by women through implicit allusion, and later the

²⁷ La Vieuville d'Orville also published *Edèle de Ponthieu*, in 1723, which was rewritten by P.-A. de La Place (1757), as well as by Saint-Marc in an opera (1772) and Noverre in a ballet (1774).

²⁸ 'Je fais des histoires anciennes [...] comme tirées de très anciens manuscrits [...]. Cette occupation me rapporte un profit raisonnable et me distrait', Riccoboni Mme, *M*^{me} *Riccoboni's Letters to David Hume, David Garrick and Sir Robert Liston: 1764–1783*, ed. J.-C. Nicholls (Oxford: 1976), May 27, 1779, 430. I give the original French text here, as well as Mlle Falques's (see next page): their irony is difficult to translate.

²⁹ Also in favour with Duclos or Voltaire, who wrote Zaïre in 1732, Adélaïde du Guesclin in 1734, and of course Tancrède in 1760.

³⁰ See Ganim J.M., Medievalism and Orientalism: Three Essays on Literature, Architecture and Cultural Identity (Houndmills: 2008).

authority of La Fontaine.³¹ Mlle Falques adopted the oriental fashion before writing *La Dernière Guerre des bêtes, fable pour servir à l'histoire du XVIII^e siècle (1758).* In her tales, the Arabic text is present, although it had to be rendered more palatable:

La bizarrerie orientale a été quelquefois bien reçue dans ce pays. Il est vrai qu'elle avait passé par des mains capables de modérer une certaine âpreté dont elle est souvent accompagnée; car il faut convenir que les auteurs arabes recherchent plus le merveilleux que le sentiment. Vous pourrez donc trouver dans ces contes, malgré la licence de la traduction, un goût national, qui pourra ne pas plaire à tout le monde; mais tout le monde aura tort à mon gré, si vous en êtes contente.³²

Falques's generation followed in the footsteps of women writers like Lubert, Lintot or Villeneuve. Her style is simpler, her descriptions and dialogues less intricate. Her folkloric sources are more easily identified, the main one being the orientalist Pétis de la Croix's *Mille et Un Jours*, although she does not consult the text's original version, as does Pétis. In 1753, in keeping with the logic of French fairy tales, she strongly exaggerates the pathos, morals, romance, drama, and rewards of virtuous characters within the tales. He text with an older feel. In *Cutchuc ou le géant puni*, the reader (and the giant) meet twice with a 'gouty fairy' (*fée goutteuse*): 'He came to an old castle, whose antiquity inspired a certain respect. He [...] found the fairy busy wailing and suffering, he waited for her pain to subside a bit. Then, [...] he [...] said: "Long life and good health to you, my honourable Lady". The dialogue continues, narrated tongue-in-cheek.

 $^{^{31}}$ See the passage quoted and note 33 for references. The allusion to La Fontaine is explicit at the end of the preface.

³² Falques Mlle, *Contes*, ed. R. Robert (Paris: 2007) 735–736. 'National flavour' is to be understood as an oriental national flavour that is still perceptible, despite the free translation

³³ See Robert R., "Lectures croisées d'un conte oriental: Pétis de la Croix (*Les Mille et Un Jours*, 1710), M^{llc} Falques (*Contes du sérail*, 1753)", *Féeries* 2 (2005), http://feeries.revues.org/index102.html [02.03.2010]. Robert uses as a reference *Les Mille et Un Jours*, ed. P. Sebag (Paris: 2003) 188–218.

³⁴ See Robert's analysis in Falgues, Contes 733.

³⁵ 'Il aperçut un vieux château dont l'antiquité inspirait du respect. Il [...] trouve la fée seule qui s'occupait à crier et à souffrir, il attendit un moment d'intervalle à ses douleurs. Enfin, [...] il [...] lui dit: "Vie longue et santé à vous, ma respectable Dame", ibid. 743.

³⁶ Not unlike those dialogues to be found so often in previous fairy tales, even before the 1690s (see Basile's *Lo Cunto de li cunti*, for example).

Mlle Falques, of course, was not the first to develop medieval pastiches or rewritings. The *conteuses* write in the same sentimental vein, nurtured by aristocratic patronage. Similarly, Moncrif, the Queen's reader, specifies that his *Constantes amours d'Alix et d'Alexis* (1738) was written for the princess of Armagnac and the duchess of Villars.

A gallant aesthetic also smoothes the edges of certain authentic old texts edited by scholars. When Lévesque de La Ravallière published the Poésies de Thibaut de Champagne in 1742, he linked them to the queen who inspired them, Blanche de Castille.³⁷ François Pupil, moreover, has demonstrated the eclecticism of the 1742 engravings: the comte de Champagne is seen in medieval attire, between rococo florets.³⁸ This was markedly different, for example, from the collection of bawdy fabliaux in Barbazan's more professional edition of L'Ordène de chevalerie (1756). It is worth remembering that Sainte-Palaye's Aucassin et Nicolette was attacked for its lack of polish, ³⁹ particularly in the famous passage on the herdsman. Yet in 1752, Aucassin's gallant subtitle was 'Amours du bon vieux temps'. Readers of the time, however, preferred Sainte-Palaye's Mémoires sur l'ancienne chevalerie (1759) because it was easier to understand and offered a wealth of vivid details about costumes, colours and setting. 40 In the tales under discussion, this socalled 'temporal colour' is often added to a pastoral substratum as a second ornamental layer of motifs.

Medieval Remembrance and Parody: Old Court, New Court

Our texts are the descendants of Baroque novels *via* the women writers of the 1700s. They willingly acknowledge this debt,⁴¹ although refer-

³⁷ In his Examen critique des historiens qui ont prétendu que les chansons de Thibaut, roi de Navarre s'adressaient à la reine Blanche de Castille. Pater, Lancret, Van Loo would follow the same path with their 'Conversations espagnoles'. Meissonnier is interested in medieval ornamental motifs and interprets them quite freely, not unlike Servandoni in the Gothic palace models attributed to him between 1726 and 1746. We also think of Cuvilliès le Jeune, whose Gothic patterns show a very curious mixture of Gothic and Rococo in 1760. See the 'Niches dans les deux genres gothiques' plate shown by Pupil in Pupil F., Le Style Troubadour ou la nostalgie du bon vieux temps (Nancy: 1985) 87, and Bibliothèque nationale de France, call number Est. Ha 28a, f° 210.

³⁸ Pupil, Le Style Troubadour 55.

³⁹ There also exists an important parallel tradition of texts that are critical and irreverent toward the Middle Ages, as we can see in the engravings for *La Pucelle d'Orléans*, illustrations by Gravelot for the 1762 Geneva edition.

⁴⁰ See the analysis in Pupil, Le Style Troubadour 57.

⁴¹ Françoise Vielliard shows how the sixteenth century draws more precise lines

ences to various novels were more specific in Aulnoy's tales around 1700. The latter combined elements from Spanish *novelas* with a medieval pastiche. In the 1730s, these elements had become such a *topos* that their tangled mix either formed a whole or tended to dissolve. In both cases, they lost individual character. As a result, they are not listed in our study. Conversely, we can see how tales of the period, whether deemed 'serious' like those of Mme de Lintot (1735), or highly ironic like those of Crébillon, saw their range of themes reduced to just a few episodes with a medieval flavour; only Crébillon uses medieval quotations more explicitly in his criticism.

Lintot's narratives appear to develop such allusions to the past. For instance, the woman Fatime in Timandre et Bleuette comes to sell magic herbs and leaves at the palace of King Silencieux. She reminds us of Tristan and of Italian tales in versions by Straparola (1480–1558) or the Neapolitan Giambattista Basile (c. 1575–1632) – for example, the girl in a fruit basket (Poirette) or Rapunzel. But the language here is not medieval in tone, and Fatime's speech to the monarch demonstrates the influence of the courtly heroines in Aulnov or Lhéritier.⁴² The display of magical objects to win the King's favours (as in the opening of Basile's Lo cunto de li cunti [published 1634-1636], so beloved by seventeenth-century tale writers) is a commonplace motif later developed in Aulnoy's L'Oiseau bleu with the quest of fair Florine. We should therefore seek no particular remembrance of things past here. Lintot, moreover, has a tendency to insist upon the presence of objects engraved with more or less mysterious messages. Her tales then patently entertain an intertextual relationship with former tale writers, whose texts have become authorities in their turn. But where Aulnoy indulges in a pseudo-medieval language, Lintot only alludes to it. When Prince Tendrebrun confronts Fairy Vicieuse as she offers her love in Tendrebrun et Constance, she holds a book: 'In one of her hands was a book bound in golden parchment, and in the other one was a

between 'Medieval novels [...], the debate about the epic [...] inherited from that about Ariosto, and a taste for sentimental developments' (my translation). Scholars in the history of language like Du Bellay, although they refuse artificial adaptations of medieval novels, affirm that those adaptations 'help preserve old words'. Vielliard, "Qu'est-ce que le 'roman de chevalerie?'" 22–23. But the new hero, whose constant love is even more remarkable than his valiance, 'relinquishes the old chivalric ideal, then regarded as obsolete'. Ibid. 22–23. See also Capello S., "Aux origines de la réflexion française sur le roman", in Bury E. – Mora F. (eds.), *Du roman courtois au roman baroque* (Paris: 2004) 415–435.

⁴² Lintot, Contes 590.

wand, with which she tapped his shoulder'. ⁴³ And yet, the mere presence of the book is ridiculed. The prince has another, more important concern, as he sees the miniature princess Constance, hidden under the fairy's dress, grow more and more quickly.

Medieval accessories, secret keys, indecipherable parchments, caskets with elaborate locks and magic books of spells appear in the manner of a Chinese box. As for Fatime's magic leaf, for example, 'It was written upon it that whoever put this leaf in their left hand would become invisible, and should one put it on one's heart, one would know the most secret thoughts of anybody one met'. Here we have the ghosts of the oriental tales about caliphs that enjoyed huge popularity at the beginning of the century thanks to specialists like Galland (translator of *The Thousand and One Nights*, 1704), Pétis de la Croix and Gueullette (*Les mille et un quarts-d'heure*, 1715). At this point, however, they are mixed with many other literary references and therefore reduced to a decorative role in the larger nostalgia for distant times.

A tale by Mme Levesque, *Le Prince invisible* (1722), for example, shows the eponymous hero in a writing cabinet where he observes the inaccessible Rosalie writing verse; thus, there are multiple reader figures. Because of his presence as a helpless reader and voyeur, the prince illustrates the figure of the reader as an intradiegetic motif; the past, here, is that of the seventeenth-century pastoral novel. Lintot's tales also glorify a hidden retreat of the sort experienced by Perrault's Grisélidis. For example, Bleuette, in Timandre et Bleuette, steps into a cottage not unlike that of the former shepherdess and her father. 45 In addition to their pastoral tone, Lintot's texts always revolve, as Raymonde Robert has pointed out, around the apparition of the adjuvant or, rather paradoxically, that of an attractive obstruant. Both kinds of fairy use a Rococo - and not particularly medieval - flying chariot. There are no fewer than four such arrivals in Timandre et Bleuette. Another tale by Lintot, Le Prince Sincere, also revisits operatic scenes. 46 Whether they recall operas or epics, all such episodes tend to present condensed depictions of magicians' enchanted retreats. They borrow from Orlando Furioso, Jerusalem Delivered, copiously rewritten by fairy authors like Mme Durand in La Fée Lubantine. The tale Tendrebrun et

⁴³ Ibid. 637.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid. 601.

⁴⁶ Ibid. 607.

Constance alludes even more to Les Plaisirs de l'Île enchantée with its festival and the enchantress Bonté than to the works of Ariosto or Tasso or the settings of Lully's Armida (staged from 1686 to 1761).⁴⁷ The allusion to that famous festival becomes clear at the end of the story, provisionally closed by Bonté and Tendrebrun's wedding with a syncretism typical of court ballets:

Des nymphes, par leurs danses et leurs chants, vinrent se réjouir avec eux d'une aussi belle union. Elles avaient toutes des guirlandes de fleurs, dont elles enchaînaient les deux époux. [...] Les faunes et les satyres firent retentir les bois de leurs instruments, et célébrèrent cette heureuse journée par les jeux et les fêtes qu'ils inventèrent. Enfin tout ce qui respirait dans l'île était animé par les plaisirs. 48

Paradoxically, then, one has to look to parodic tales for a more medieval tone in the rendering of aristocratic festivities. The heroine of Crébillon's Lettres de la marquise (1732) sends her beloved correspondent an invitation to a gallant feast. The letter mimics the troubadour idiom, but its irony also incorporates references that are more recent than those in Aulnoy or even Lintot. 49 As well, it embroiders on Watteau scenes as a new Pélerinage à l'île de Cythère takes place. The pseudoinitiatory journey, begun in the vestibule of a castle guarded by a giant from the Canton of Bern, then ends with the reader's complicity, after a private supper, at the gates of Paris.⁵⁰ These allusions to the medieval are meant to be subversive. In our more serious tales, not only does reactivating the past fulfil an aesthetic function that leads to the renewal of fictional motifs, but it also has a moral function (which differs, however, from that of the satire in Crébillon's novel). What we might term the 'fairy troubadour' aesthetic is defined by both aspects. It faces the challenge of rejuvenating an exhausted genre and defining a new ideal of politesse based on the 'bon vieux temps'.

⁴⁷ Ibid. 641.

⁴⁸ Ibid. 643–644 (my emphasis).

⁴⁹ Thanks to a cunning shift, the letter writer also mocks *Le Roman de la Rose* and *L'Astrée*, Italian epics, the chansons de geste and Baroque novels. The presence of *Orlando Furioso*'s Ariosto comes as no surprise, expressed as it is by the allusion to Alcina's gardens, a monster and a prolific myrtle; to Tasso's *Jerusalem Delivered* with Armida's enchanted domains; to Colonna's *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*, with the castle's architecture, the marvellous repast, and the Island of Cythera.

⁵⁰ Crébillon C., Lettres de la marquise de M***, in Œuvres complètes, ed. J. Sgard (Paris: 1999) I, 191–192. See note 163, 670, in the same edition, which also mentions drawings inspired by Poussin, Baléchou, Callot, or engraved figures in *Jerusalem Delivered*.

Tecserion by Mlle de Lubert depicts one such episode where the amalgam aesthetic and moral discourse come together. Princess Belzamine, looking for the unfaithful Mélidor, takes refuge in the Forest of the Oaks, where she attends a Council of the Trees. Two visions are then superimposed, a pastoral clearing and the imagery of Saint Louis rendering Justice under the oak tree, with a metonymic shift from the sovereign to the oak: 'August and honourable Oak, said one of those who formed the circle, your words are full of wisdom, and you rightly bear the glorious name of the Protector'. 51 A little farther on, the trees get into a dispute about granting asylum, which one of the young oak trees recommends to the King in the name of Justice. 52 In Tecserion's case, the episode, rendered in gallant style, stands alone in the midst of the narrative. The same Mlle de Lubert, who seems to have been content with following this method until the 1740s, changes tone a decade later, as we shall see. It appears that her treatment of the past evolved thanks to the works of Caylus and Sainte-Palaye, which she read before adapting Aucassin et Nicolette (1752).

The 'Incrustation' of Medieval Matter

Aesthetic 'incrustation' or *enkystage* is a phenomenon that was first defined by Raymonde Robert and Jean-François Perrin. Perrin mentions 'incrustation' when the reader encounters halls of images within medieval romances like *Tristan*, *La Mort le roi Artu*, or *ekphraseis* in 'antique romances'.⁵³ In our corpus, works like Lubert's *La Veillée Galante* (1747) or *Blancherose* (1751) welcome the apparition of naive, 'rustic' passages, even sheet music for peasant or pastoral songs, along with the stories. These show the growing importance of the storytelling event that leads

⁵¹ Lubert Mlle de, Contes, ed. A. Zygel-Basso (Paris: 2005) 104.

⁵² Lubert, ibid. See our analysis: Lubert may also have remembered the letter of King Stanislas of Poland to Louis XV.

⁵³ Perrin J.-F., "Recueillir et transmettre, l'effet anthologique dans le conte merveilleux (XVII^c–XVIII^e siècle)", *Féeries* 1 (2004) 148. See also, according to J.-F. Perrin, Gontero V., *Parures d'or et de gemmes* (Paris: 2002) 196, and Kelly D., "Lancelot et Eneas, une analogie dans le Lancelot en prose", *Lancelot-Lanzelet hier et aujourd'hui* (Greifswald: 1995) 227–232. Concerning the presence of medieval fiction in seventeenth-century novelists, see Létoublon F., *Les Lieux communs du roman* (Paris: 1993), and Fusillo M., *Naissance du roman* (Paris: 1991) 82–83.

to the text of the tale itself. For instance, the story included in La Veillée Galante, called Le Petit chien blanc, has no significance whatsoever, occupying only about ten pages within a duodecimo format. But we find the musical notation of vaudevilles sung by 'those good people' in the 1747 edition, with linguistic archaisms (suppressed articles or personal pronouns) exactly like the ones in the tales by Mlle Falgues,⁵⁴ only with less irony. As regards Blancherose, one also finds passages with a tone that differs distinctly from the more polished overall tone. Such passages do not occur frequently, but they may be significant given they were not included in previous tales. When the enchanted cabinet arrives to save the princess from the ogre's appetite, it conceals a merchant dressed as an Armenian. He then sings the following stanzas with a magic mandolin: 'Qui voudra ma belle armoire,/ tant belle armoire/ la payera/ Elle est d'or ma belle armoire/ Tant belle armoire/ Et le sera./ Qui la payera l'aura/ Ma tant, tant, tant belle armoire/ Qui l'aura qui l'ouvrira/ Tout enchanté pas ne croira/ Ce qu'il verra'. 55 The same ambiguity (a blend of 'rustic' and aristocratic tones) informs La Veillée Galante, revealing the narrator's taste for the eclogue, later roundly mocked, for instance, in the letter in Rousseau's Nouvelle Héloïse where Julie imitates the then fashionable troubadour style (although Rousseau had also written a serious pastoral opera, Le Devin du village, in 1752). The use of that mixed tone also paved the way for Riccoboni's short stories (nouvelles), which frequently combine elements of the Middle Ages, the Louis XIII era and Italian epics.

But the limits of medieval incrustation can also be observed in another tale by Lubert, *Peau d'Ours*. This story of a sanguinary magician is enclosed within Lubert's version of Mme de Murat's *Les Lutins du château de Kernosy*. Accordingly, the elegant society circle precedes the storytelling, which takes place, as usual, between intimates attempting to dispel *ennui*. Even as they imitate a village evening gathering, these tales always emphasise the salon's social circle; they do not attempt to recreate old times. In her analysis of *Bliombéris*, a short story by Florian, Françoise Gevrey underscores that process: 'a worldly use of chivalry thus precedes the writing of *Bliombéris*, a text one could read by anamorphosis, using reading keys at the disposal of a small circle of

⁵⁴ Lubert, Contes 337.

⁵⁵ Ibid. 348.

initiates'. ⁵⁶ Such a circle was that of the Piogers in Abbéville or Brailly. In Lubert's edition of Murat, this worldly use of chivalry is fictional since the plot draws attention to it. Les Lutins du château de Kernosy⁵⁷ describes two fashionable, bored young ladies. They are staying with their aunt, a Bélise longing for Amadis to appear, in a castle that 'is precisely like those said to be haunted by spirits'. 58 Furthermore, the depiction of the castle brings an aesthetic controversy that sets the aunt and her nieces in opposition. The latter notice how archaic the mansion is, with its 'half broken ponts-levis' (ponts-levis à demi-rompus), its rooms with narrow windows that let in but a partial light, its park resembling a meadow.⁵⁹ Superstitious illusions are further denounced along with the uncritical love of a Middle Ages viewed as merely exotic. Ridicule also allows the narrator and Lubert to reach an implicit moral definition of the 'real' Middle Ages. Those times will be truly honnête and frank, although the modern reader is sometimes hard-pressed to see much of a difference between the two ways of envisioning the past. When Lubert adapted *Amadis des Gaules* a few years later, she appeared to follow the same aesthetic and moral path as in the abovementioned texts. It is also interesting to observe a difference in Lintot, who lived at a greater distance from salon society than Lubert. In the tales of the former, allusions to pre-seventeenth-century times are very rare. Her areas of expertise were the opera and the pastoral novel. The Lubert siblings, on the other hand, were familiar with the court of Stanislas Lezczinski, Duke of Lorraine, as well as with the Count of Tressan, who rewrote many medieval texts. Medieval fairy tales can therefore be seen as another avatar of salon values.

⁵⁶ Gevrey F., "Florian et les romans de chevalerie: du périodique au novelliere", in Diu I. – Parinet E. – Vielliard F. (eds.), Mémoires des chevaliers. Édition, diffusion et réception des romans de chevalerie du XVII au XX siècle (Paris: 2007) 53.

⁵⁷ Murat Henriette-Julie de Castelnau, comtesse de, *Les Lutins du château de Kernosy, nouvelle historique, par Mme la Ctesse de M**** (Paris, J. Le Febvre: 1710). See Gonssolin B., *La baguette magique et le grand livre: vers une poétique du conte merveilleux chez M^{tle} de Lubert (1737–1756)*, MA thesis, University of Grenoble III, 2006 (online: biffures.org/wpcontent/uploads/2007/11/memoiresmasterbgonssollin.pdf). See Rivara A., "Le Voyage de campagne comme machine à produire et détruire des contes d'esprits", in Jomand-Baudry R. – Perrin J.-F. (eds.), *Le Conte merveilleux au XVIII^e siècle: une poétique expérimentale* (Paris: 2002) 366.

¹⁵⁸ Murat, *Les Lutins du château de Kernosy, Voyages imaginaires* 154. See Rivara, "Le Voyage de campagne comme machine à produire et détruire des contes d'esprits" 366. ⁵⁹ Gonssolin, *La baguette magique et le grand livre* 245.

Conclusion

The 'fairy troubadour' aesthetic of the 1750s reflects an ideal sociability. The concept is closer than might be thought to the first works of its creators, the *conteuses*, with their nostalgia for the *ruelles*, and it reflects the need of certain scholars to link the values of modern courts to those of older ones. But the fairy troubadour also played a crucial role as the definition of the fairy genre evolved. The last feminine tales appear to have been a kind of experimental laboratory in preparation for the second half of the century. Thanks to their retrospective gallant style, they may have paved the way for the second period of medieval-inspired fiction – the Gothic novels. When Baculard d'Arnaud adapted the *Mémoires du comte de Comminges* by Mme de Tencin (1735) into *Les Amans malheureux*, *ou le comte de Comminge* (1764), he made the *roman sensible* serve 'an aesthetics of the sombre and the macabre'. The fairy matter is stylised and its vocabulary is redeployed to convey the enthusiasm so dear to Baculard.

By the 1760s, gallant fairy tales had become a thing of the past; the delights of the imagination were now to be found in darkness and terror. Nevertheless, as the tales became extinct, they helped redefine writers' interest in past times along with the very idea of the past. From then on, fairy tales themselves belonged to the 'bon vieux temps'. Anthologies such as the *Cabinet des fées* (1785–1789) at the turn of the century pronounced their death sentence while bestowing on them documentary dignity. Elsewhere, the editors of the *Nouvelle Bibliothèque bleue, ou Recueil d'histoires singulières et naïves*, published in 1769–1770 by Jean Castilhon, chose to insert two texts, *Fortunatus* et *Jean de Calais*, respectively. But these narratives are not 'authentic' medieval romances. *Fortunatus* was published in Augsburg in 1509; *Jean de Calais*, a tale by Mme de Gomez, was inserted in les *Journées amusantes dédiées au Roy* written between 1722 and 1731. Obviously, editors at the turn of

⁶⁰ See Deharbe C., "La réception des Mémoires du comte de Comminge de M^{mc} de Tencin: un canevas de drame pour Baculard d'Arnaud", paper given at the CIERL Young Researchers Conference (Rimouski: June 2008), to be published in Cahiers du CIERL.

⁶¹ Deharbe, "La réception des Mémoires du comte de Comminge de M^{mc} de Tencin".

⁶² Baculard d'Arnaud François-Thomas-Marie de, Les Amants Malheureux, Ou Le Comte De Comminge, Drame En Trois Actes Et En Vers, Précédé D'Un Discours Préliminaire ℰ Suivi Des Mémoires Du Comte De Comminge (The Hague − Paris, n.p.: 1765), 2^e discours préliminaire XIV.

the century were quite open to assimilating texts having a *naïf* overall tone,⁶³ and the nineteenth century would do so with even less hesitation: 'It is precisely at the time it [the *Bibliothèque bleue*] was becoming extinct owing to its replacement by those cheap dime novels dear to Madame Bovary, that it also became an aesthetic ideal, a Museum treasure, mummified, untouchable, and highly respectable'.⁶⁴ Sedaine, the author of the libretto for *Aucassin et Nicolette* (1779), follows the new trend as one of his characters, 'le vicomte', offers young Aucassin an aesthetic and moral definition of medieval incrustation:

Les cerfs, les sangliers ravagent les moissons, Quelques loups affamés désolent ces cantons. Détruisez-les, voilà le digne ouvrage Qui vous convient, & comme une chanson Dit fort bien, quoique vieille, elle est une leçon Bien faite pour l'état où l'amour vous engage, Car ces vieilles chansons qui passent d'âge en âge, Ont un bon sens qui les fait respecter, On n'en fait plus de bonne [...]. 65

⁶³ Andries L. "La 'Bibliothèque Bleue' et la redécouverte des romans de chevalerie au XVIII^e siècle", in Damian-Grint, *Medievalism and 'manière gothique'* 59.

⁶⁴ Ibid. 66 (my translation).

⁶⁵ Sedaine Michel-Jean, Aucassin et Nicolette, ou Les Mœurs du bon vieux tems, comédie en quatre actes et en vers, Dont une partie est mise en Musique; Représentée, pour la première fois, devant Leurs Majestés à Versailles, le 30 Décembre 1779, par les Comédiens Italiens Ordinaires du Roi, & à Paris, le 3 Janvier1780 (Paris, Basset: 1780) 45.

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OLD FRENCH IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY: AUCASSIN ET NICOLETTE

Peter Damian-Grint

The complex publishing history of the short medieval prosimetric work Aucassin et Nicolette provides a certain, perhaps unexpected, insight into eighteenth-century attitudes to Old French literature and indeed to the Middle Ages in general. This 'chantefable', as its anonymous author called it, would seem (at least on one level) to be ideally suited to an eighteenth-century readership: a 'strange and powerful fable' that tells a tale of thwarted but finally triumphant love, allied to a deliciously subversive sense of humour, a dash of derring-do and the attractive exoticism of a medieval setting. It was first presented to a modern French public in 1752, but not in its original form: in fact, no critical edition of the text appeared until Paul Méon included one in his expanded re-edition of Étienne Barbazan's Fabliaux et contes in 1808, over fifty years later. Nevertheless, during those fifty years Aucassin et Nicolette can be said to have entered fully into French culture through a series of different incarnations, being rewritten in translations, a fairytale, an extrait, a narrative poem and an operetta.²

Yet despite the variety of literary forms under which Aucassin et Nicolette appears, the same attitudes and the same approaches to the text come up again and again. They indicate that in the eyes of the general public – or at least the writers and publishers – of eighteenth-century France, two elements are of crucial importance in the reception of literary medievalism: a particular archaism of a distinctive kind, and (perhaps more surprisingly) a very up-to-date sensibilité. One would naturally expect a thirteenth-century love story to already include both elements almost by definition, and this may indeed have been what made Aucassin et Nicolette particularly attractive to prospective rewriters.

¹ Charlton D., "Aucassin et Nicolette ou les mœurs du bon vieux temps (Aucassin and Nicolette or the customs of the good old days)", in id., *Grétry and the Growth of opéra-comique* (Cambridge: 1986) 191.

² For some of the editions of Aucassin et Nicolette, see Martin A. – Mylne V. – Frautschi R., Bibliographie du genre romanesque français, 1751–1800 (London: 1977) no. 52.6.

Nevertheless, in the different versions of the text that appeared throughout the century these two elements, archaism and sentimentalism, are consistently heightened by their eighteenth-century adaptors.

Translation: La Curne de Sainte-Palaye's Les Amours du Bon Vieux Temps

The publishing history of *Aucassin et Nicolette* begins with the discovery of the manuscript in the Bibliothèque royale in Paris by the distinguished Old French scholar Jean-Baptiste de La Curne de Sainte-Palaye.³ Sainte-Palaye did not, however, produce a critical edition of the text: the eighteenth-century public was not yet ready for Old French in its raw state, as was convincingly shown just a few years later by Barbazan's *Fabliaux et contes*, an austerely scholarly production which was a commercial flop.⁴ Instead Sainte-Palaye published a modernized version – in effect a translation – in the *Mercure de France*, under the title 'Histoire ou romance d'Aucassin et de Nicolette, tirée d'un ancien manuscrit'.⁵ Although the subtitle simply indicates an ancient original,⁶ the use of the word 'tirée' could also be a hint to the alert reader to expect the kind of résumé-cum-translation that appeared in the *Mercure*, the *Année littéraire* and other periodicals of the time.

It seems, nevertheless, a strange decision for one of the foremost antiquarians of France to publish a medieval text in the *Mercure* – and to publish it anonymously, besides, for his contribution is unsigned. Why did he not publish it in the *Mémoires de l'Académie Royale des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres*, his favoured place of publication?⁷ Even if editions

³ It is now Bibliothèque nationale de France, fonds français 2168, fol. 70r–80v. The date of Sainte-Palaye's discovery is not known.

⁴ Barbazan Etienne, Fabliaux et contes des poètes français des XII, XIII, XIV et XV siècles (Paris, Philippe Vincent: 1756); see Wilson G., A Medievalist in the Eighteenth Century: Le Grand d'Aussy and the 'Fabliaux ou Contes', Archives Internationales d'Histoire des Idées 83 (The Hague: 1975) 61–62; Damian-Grint P., "From Trésor des recherches to Vocabulaire austrasien: Old French dictionaries in France, 1655–1777", in Damian-Grint P. (ed.), Medievalism and 'manière gothique' in Enlightenment France, Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century 2006:05 (Oxford: 2006) 109–110.

Mercure de France (1752) février 10–65.

⁶ Not surprisingly, Sainte-Palaye eschews 'gothique' for a more neutral term.

⁷ Some fifteen mémoires, remarques and notices of Sainte-Palaye's had already appeared in vol. VII–XVII of the Mémoires de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettes and four more would appear in later volumes (XX–XXVI). See Gossman L., Medievalism and the Ideologies of the Enlightenment: The World and Work of La Curne de Sainte-Palaye (Baltimore: 1968) 359–360.

of medieval texts were not common in the *Mémoires*, they were by no means unknown.⁸ And if he must publish in the *Mercure*, why did he not at least sign the article? To have added his name to it would have indicated that it was a scholarly piece; it was *historiettes*, light verse and other such works of fiction — including pseudo-medieval texts⁹ — that appeared anonymously in the periodical.

The place and mode of publication indicate very strongly, in fact, that Sainte-Palaye felt the 'Histoire ou romance d'Aucassin et de Nicolette' too frivolous to add lustre to his name, ¹⁰ and this would be entirely in keeping with his generally low opinion of Old French literature *as literature*. ¹¹ Certainly the detached, scholarly style of the introduction seems almost unnecessarily dismissive of the text that it is introducing, presenting it as of historical interest only and certainly not of any great literary merit.

Il ne s'agit pas de donner un ouvrage sans défaut, celui ci en a beaucoup qu'on ne prétend pas dissimuler; il est question de faire connoître au vrai nos anciennes mœurs; & comme rien n'est plus propre à les représenter au naturel que cette composition, on a cru ne pouvoir conserver avec trop de fidélité, dans la copie, tous les traits de l'original.¹²

Sainte-Palaye presents his task as one not of translation but simply of modernization, in order to put the text within the reach of a nonspecialist readership. In his own words, he

⁸ For example vol. XX (1753), in which his five "Mémoires sur l'ancienne chevalerie" appeared, also contains a long extract from Guillaume de Machaut's verse chronicle the *Prise d'Alexandrie*, presented by the comte de Caylus (415–439).

⁹ Pseudo-medieval texts are relatively frequent in the period, but apart from some extracts from (or possibly imitations of) the letters of Abélard and Héloïse, no genuine medieval texts appeared in the *Mercure*.

¹⁰ Later re-publications of the translation were similarly anonymous: see below. Le Grand d'Aussy identifies Sainte-Palaye as the author of the translation in his own version of the work in 1779; but he was a disciple and friend of Sainte-Palaye, and it is not clear how much earlier the identification was made.

^{&#}x27;No one in the France of his day knew more about the literary productions of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. But equally no one thought less of them as literature. Sainte-Palaye was first and foremost historian. He rarely gave more than a moment's thought to the artistic abilities of the "anciens rimeurs", never once thinking to set them against their eighteenth-century brethren. For him they simply did not bear comparison', Wilson G., A Medievalist in the Eighteenth Century: Le Grand d'Aussy and the Fabliaux ou Contes', Archives Internationales d'Histoire des Idées 83 (The Hague: 1975) x; see also 70–72.

¹² [La Curne de Sainte-Palaye Jean Baptiste de], "Histoire ou romance d'Aucassin et de Nicolette, tirée d'un ancien manuscrit", *Mercure de France* (1752) février, 11–12.

[...] n'a fait que mettre dans un françois intelligible le texte original qui ne pourroit être entendu que d'un petit nombre de personnes [...]. Il a rendu scrupuleusement dans la Prose la simplicité & la naïveté du dialogue; mais à l'égard de la versification, il n'en a pas toujours conservé aussi exactement la mesure & les rimes.¹³

The rendering is indeed a close one, frequently word for word, but it may be noted that Sainte-Palaye, although he is in theory providing a text in modern French, in fact permits himself numerous archaisms, particularly in the verse sections – sometimes using words more archaic than those in the original. Though he is writing as a historian, his aesthetic and literary sense lead him to produce a text that is not, in fact, an accurate representation of the Old French but is intended, rather, to evoke strongly the *feeling* of an ancient work of literature; he is providing a pleasing frisson of exoticism without sacrificing intelligibility. Indeed, given his view of Old French literature, he would no doubt have seen himself as 'improving' his original. Nevertheless it must be admitted that, despite a later claim that the work 'obtint alors des suffrages distingués', the 'Histoire ou romance d'Aucassin et de Nicolette' in the *Mercure* raised few echoes in the contemporary press. The sufficient of the contemporary press.

Four years later, Sainte-Palaye's translation of *Aucassin et Nicolette* reappeared, in a slim volume – still anonymous – published by the Parisian bookseller Nicolas-Bonaventure Duchesne under the title of *Les Amours du bon vieux temps*. ¹⁸ It was accompanied by a modernized version of a short Old French love poem, *La Châtelaine de Saint-Gilles*, presumably also provided by Sainte-Palaye, although there is no direct evidence for this. In any case, the volume looks much more like a publisher's venture than a scholar's. The addition of *La Châtelaine de Saint-*

¹³ Ibid. 11.

¹⁴ He could nevertheless argue that such archaisms are within the limits he has set himself, as he has promised 'un françois *intelligible*', not 'moderne'.

See Couvreur M., "D'Aucassin et Nicolette au Chevalier du Soleil: Grétry, Philidor et le roman en romances", in Damian-Grint, Medievalism and 'manière gothique' 135–136.
 [La Curne de Sainte-Palaye Jean-Baptiste de], Les Amours du bon vieux temps (Vau-

cluse – Paris, Nicolas-Bonaventure Duchesne: 1760), "Avis du libraire" [unpaginated].

This may have been in part because it was anonymous: it seems unlikely that a work under the name of 'M. de Sainte-Palaye' would have been so completely

¹⁸ Described in Ersch Johann Samuel, *La France littéraire contenant les auteurs français de 1771 à 1796 – Das gelehrte Frankreich oder Lexicon der französischen Schriftsteller von 1771 bis 1796*, 3 vols. (Hamburg, B.G. Hoffmann: 1797) as an 'Ed. augmentee' of the 1752 publication, but dated to 1755.

Gilles makes little sense in purely scholarly terms (it is entirely unrelated to Aucassin et Nicolette), but responds to a clear publishing imperative to bulk out the volume to a reasonable length: even with the two works together, it is less than 80 pages long. The same publishing imperative appears also to have informed the choice of the book's title: although arguably an accurate one for a collection of medieval love-stories, it must surely have been chosen by Duchesne, for Sainte-Palaye's idea of the 'amours du bon vieux temps' was rather different:

[...] on affecte de nous vanter l'amour antique, cet amour si tendre, si constant & si pur; mais la vérité est que dans les *bons vieux tems*, comme on les appelle, l'amour n'étoit pas plus délicat qu'il l'est aujourd'hui. 19

As a further advertisement to the book-buying public, the volume was prefaced by Marot's rondeau "De l'amour du siècle antique", with its refrain 'Au bon vieulx temps', just in case the prospective reader might not immediately pick up the reference. Although Sainte-Palaye had made no attempt to emphasize the sentimental aspect of *Aucassin et Nicolette*, Duchesne's commercial nose led him to identify this as a key selling point for his book — and to act accordingly.

Unlike the periodical publication, the book did pick up some 'suffrages distingués': Élie-Catherine Fréron, the foremost literary critic of his time, consecrated over half of one issue of his *Année littéraire* to a review of *Aucassin et Nicolette*.²⁰ Some of what he says is lifted verbatim from Sainte-Palaye's own introduction, but the great majority of the ten pages are devoted to a lengthy and detailed summary of the plot containing numerous extended quotations from the translation, to the extent that the review is itself to all intents and purposes a new presentation of the text in the form of an *extrait* or a *copie réduite*. But

[&]quot;Mémoires sur l'ancienne chevalerie: Second extrait", Journal encyclopédique (1758) VIII, 91–92. This passage, not by Sainte-Palaye himself, restates in rather more pungent terms his comments in his "Cinquième mémoire sur l'ancienne chevalerie, considérée comme un établissement politique & militaire", Histoire de l'Académie royale des inscriptions et belles lettres, depuis son établissement jusqu'à présent: avec les Mémoires de littérature tirez des registres de cette Académie (1753) XX, 687, when he refers to "l'amour antique, si tendre, si constant, si pur & si vanté [...] deux ou trois cens ans avant Marot on avoit, comme lui & presque dans les mêmes termes, regrété le train d'amour qui régnoit au bon vieux temps". See also 684–687 passim.

²⁰ Fréron Élie-Catherine, *Année littéraire* (1756) III, 338–348 (Lettre XV, 4 juillet). The texts are described by Fréron as 'l'épigraphe de deux Romances' (épigraphe is used here in an extended sense to mean 'quotation' or 'extract'); but *La Châtelaine de Saint-Gilles* is not quoted but simply referred to briefly.

despite the care and literary skill with which the *extrait* is extracted, the reviewer's enthusiasm is muted, and his 'suffrages' include the damning comment:

Rien n'est plus propre à représenter au naturel nos anciennes mœurs que cette composition, & c'est-là son principal mérite; car le fond de l'histoire n'a rien de bien piquant.²¹

This remark takes Sainte-Palaye's own scholarly presentation of his text and uses it against him, as well as echoing the 'Avis du Libraire',²² in less flattering terms.

Despite the negative edge to the review, *Les Amours du bon vieux temps* seems to have been a reasonable publishing success. Duchesne issued a new edition in 1760, four years after the original edition, and there are references to an edition of *Aucassin et Nicolette* on its own published the following year, though no copies are known to have survived.²³

Fairy-tale: Mlle de Lubert's Ismir et Étoilette

Despite the lack of press comment about, or publicity for, Sainte-Palaye's 'Histoire ou romance d'Aucassin et de Nicolette' in the *Mercure de France*, it did not go entirely without notice. One person whose attention it may have caught was the author Marie-Madeleine de Lubert – unless she was alerted to it by Sainte-Palaye himself, as the two corresponded.²⁴ Although known primarily as a writer of fairy tales, Mlle de Lubert was no stranger to medieval literature; she had recently published a modern adaptation of the late medieval romance *Amadis des Gaules*.²⁵ She was just then in the process of preparing a

²¹ Ibid. 339.

²² 'Les amateurs de notre Antiquité trouveront dans ces deux petits Poëmes une peinture non suspecte de nos mœurs anciennes. Peut-être le reste des Lecteurs ne sera-t-il point insensible à la naïveté des sentimens qui en fait le principal mérite' ("Avis du Libraire").

²³ It may perhaps have been a pirate version.

²⁴ See Montoya A.C., "D'un Amadis à l'autre: anciens et modernes devant la littérature médiévale, 1684–1750", in Coignard T. – Davis P. – Montoya A.C. (eds.), Lumières et histoire / Enlightenment and History (Paris: 2010) 135–153.

²⁵ Her *Amadis* was published in 1750; the continuation was published the following year under the title of *Les hauts faits d'Esplendian* (Amsterdam: Jean François Jolly, 1751). Mlle de Lubert's version was based on Nicolas de Herberay des Essarts's French translation of *Amadis*, first published 1540–1548. The *Bibliothèque Universelle des Romans* of janvier 1777 (Paris, Jacques Lacombe – Charles-Joseph Panckoucke: 1777)

new edition of the comtesse de Murat's sentimental novel *Les Lutins du château de Kernosy*,²⁶ and saw previously unexpected possibilities in the medieval tale. Her 'Nouvelle édition' of *Les Lutins*, published in 1753, was not only revised and modernized but also, as it announces proudly in the title page, 'augmentée de deux contes'.²⁷ These two new fairy tales, of Mlle de Lubert's own devising, were *Peau d'ours*, a clever variation on the fairy tale of *La Belle et la Bête*, and *Étoilette* (or *Ismir et Étoilette*), an adaptation of *Aucassin et Nicolette*.

Given Mlle de Lubert's literary bent, it is hardly surprising to find her turning *Aucassin et Nicolette* into a fully-fledged *conte de fées* in the approved eighteenth-century style. The characters' names are changed to be exotic or symbolic, in keeping with the fairy-tale setting: Aucassin and Nicolette become Ismir and Étoilette; Aucassin's father, the comte Garins, becomes the Roi Pacifique, who is attacked, logically if not very imaginatively, by the Roi Guerrier. Vivid description of fabulous treasures and luxury abound (this being another of Mlle de Lubert's trademarks); more strictly fairy-tale embellishments include a tribe of centaurs and a ship manned by angora cats.

With all this, the story remains remarkably faithful to the original.²⁸ The basic plot suffers little change; there is even a certain sly humour not dissimilar from the Old French version's (although its expression is rather different); the most notable alteration is in the treatment of the hero and heroine. Mlle de Lubert's Ismir behaves exactly as appropriate for an eighteenth-century hero of *sensibilité*, and although this is quite close to the behaviour of the thirteenth-century Aucassin, the parodic effect of the original is lost, in part because Étoilette is a similarly formulaic heroine, far more ready to weep than to imitate the unladylike behaviour of the active and energetic Nicolette, who

^{182,} calls *Amadis* 'son principal ouvrage' and describes the volumes as 'écrits dans un style pure et bon, mais qui fait nécessairement perdre à l'ancien roman le mérite de la naïveté'.

²⁶ Murat Henriette-Julie de Castelnau comtesse de, *Les Lutins du château de Kernosy, nouvelle historique, par Mme la Ctesse de M**** (Paris, J. Le Febvre: 1710). See Sermain J.-P., "Le conte de fées classique et le Moyen Age (1690–1712)", in Damian-Grint, *Medievalism and 'manière gothique'* 80; Raynard S., *La seconde préciosité: floraison des conteuses de 1690 à 1756* (Tübingen: 2002).

²⁷ Murat Henriette-Julie de Castelnau comtesse de – Lubert Marie-Madeleine de, Les Lutins du château de Kernosy, nouvelle historique de Mad. la comtesse de Murat. Nouvelle édition [...] augmentée de deux contes (Leiden, n.p.: 1753).

²⁶ See the notes to Lubert Marie-Madeleine de, "Étoilette" in Zygel-Basso A. (ed.), *Contes* (Paris: 2005) 359–387, which identify the major changes in the narrative.

escapes from her prison by knotting sheets together and climbing out of the window.

So far, so conventional; but there is worse to come. A major new protagonist is introduced in the shape of the good fairy Herminette, who appears to Étoilette in her prison and thenceforth becomes the primary mover behind the action, rescuing Étoilette from perils and dangers, giving her little moral lectures and bringing about her final reunion with Ismir – and in the process turning both Ismir and Étoilette into largely passive figures.

But Mlle de Lubert was writing with her potential audience in mind. Although the *conte de fées* in the mid-eighteenth century was by no means a rigid genre closed to innovation, there were none the less certain constants in the familiar, unreal world of 'il était une fois' in which the tale unfolds – although we should not forget that the classical French fairy tale is heavily reliant on a medieval atmosphere;²⁹ and *Étoilette*, despite its fairy-tale accoutrements, in fact draws extensively on the medieval world of *Aucassin et Nicolette*. In emphasizing and exaggerating both the sentiment and the exotic medievalism of the thirteenth-century text, Mlle Lubert went a long way towards conventionalizing what is in fact a highly unconventional original; and in so doing she was giving her readers exactly what they wanted, as is suggested by the fact that *Étoilette* appears unchanged in later eighteenth-century editions of *Les Lutins du château de Kernosy*.³⁰

Modernization: Le Grand d'Aussy's Fabliaux ou Contes

The next appearance of Aucassin et Nicolette after Duchesne's 1760 edition of Les Amours du bon vieux temps was nearly twenty years later, in the collection of Fabliaux ou contes du XIII^e et du XIII^e siècle (1779) by

²⁹ See Sermain, "Le conte de fées classique".

³⁰ The first of these editions is *Le Séjour des amans ou Les lutins du château de Kernosy*, 2 vols. (Leiden, n.p.: 1773). A copy in the Taylorian Library in Oxford (VET. FR.II.A.202) has the following note in what appears to be a contemporary hand: 'par M^{dme} la comtesse de Murat. il y a une edit: de 1753 sous le titre les lutins de Kernosy portant le nom de l'auteur; c'est la même sauf le titre et la date'. It is unclear whether this is a genuine new edition, a re-issue of the 1753 edition with a new title-page, or a pirate edition; the lack of names of both author and publisher on the title page suggests the third of these possibilities, as does the fact that this 1773 edition does not appear in the *Bibliographie du genre romanesque français*. The novel also appears in *Voyages imaginaires, songes, visions, et romans cabalistiques* 35 (1789) 151–423.

a disciple of Sainte-Palaye's, Pierre-Jean-Baptiste Le Grand d'Aussy. Although Le Grand d'Aussy was aiming to popularize the fabliaux, he was no mere cultured amateur but a serious scholar in his own right, and his translations are based on (for the period) detailed manuscript research; he acknowledges the help of Sainte-Palaye, though only as a generous provider of manuscript material;³¹ and it is clear that his translations were not directly related to Sainte-Palaye's. He seems to have had (unlike Sainte-Palaye) a real, albeit limited, appreciation for the literary qualities of the fabliaux, and his translations, which are all in prose, are in general quite close to the original Old French. *Aucassin et Nicolette* is no exception. As in most other eighteenth-century versions, the text is almost entirely in prose: the single exception is the song by Nicolette in disguise, which is copied more or less exactly from the Sainte-Palaye version.

In comparison with Sainte-Palaye's translation, Le Grand d'Aussy's is noticeably modern in style. While leaving the medieval *mise en scène* intact, he nevertheless entirely eschews Sainte-Palaye's archaisms and settles instead for a clear, modern diction with a flowing syntax and sentences considerably longer than the original. As part of his modernization he also adds explanations and linking passages in order to make all the actions psychologically plausible to a modern readership, as for example in the description of Nicolette's arrival at Carthage:

Mais lorsqu'on entra dans Cartage, quel fut son étonnement à l'aspect des murs & des appartemens du château, de reconnaître les lieux où elle avait été nourrie. Celui du Roi ne fut pas moindre quand il lui entendit raconter quelques circonstances qui prouvait qu'elle était sa fille.³²

Allied to this modernization are the numerous changes and additions which show significant concessions to the demands of eighteenth-century *sensibilité*. Thus while the disguised Nicolette is singing of her love for Aucassin, we are told:

³¹ 'Je dois à M. de Sainte-Palaye les premiers matériaux avec lesquels j'ai commencé cet Ouvrage, & qui m'en ont même inspiré le projet', Le Grand d'Aussy Pierre-Jean-Baptiste, Fabliaux ou contes du XII et du XIII siècle traduits ou extraits d'après divers manuscripts du temps, avec des notes historiques & critiques les imitations qui ont été faites de ces contes depuis leur origine jusqu'à nos jours, 3 vols. (Paris, Eugène Onfroy: 1779) I, lxxxix. See Middleton R., "Le Grand d'Aussy and the Bibliothèque Universelle des Romans", Nottingham French Studies 27 (1988) 4–5.

³² Le Grand d'Aussy, Fabliaux ou contes III, 56.

Pendant tout le tems que dura cette chanson, Aucassin fut hors de luimême. Son cœur était si oppressé qu'il pouvait à peine respirer [...]. La Pucelle se retira; mais en tournant la tête afin de voir encore son ami, elle s'apperçut qu'il était tout en larmes. Son cœur en fut touché. Elle revint sur ses pas pour le prier de prendre courage, & l'assura que bientôt, & plutôt même qu'il ne l'espérait, elle lui feroit voir sa douce amie qu'il aimait tant.³³

Such passages may betray the influence of the great eighteenth-century novelist of *sensibilité*, Baculard d'Arnaud: his best-seller *Sargines*, which is set in the Middle Ages, had been published just a few years before, although there are no direct borrowings.³⁴ At the same time, the limits of Le Grand d'Aussy's modernization may be noted; as the quote above shows, he is not afraid to include turns of phrase taken almost directly from the thirteenth-century text; and indeed, in general terms we can say that the Old French original is still clearly visible, at least to those who already know it.³⁵

The success of Le Grand d'Aussy's version of the fabliaux was solid enough to permit a fourth volume and then a five-volume second edition to be published in 1781, and English and German translations quickly followed.³⁶ As a result, it was Le Grand d'Aussy's more sentimental and modernized *Aucassin et Nicolette*, rather than Sainte-Palaye's more sober and archaic translation, that became better known among eighteenth-century readers.

Operetta: Grétry and Sedaine's Les Mœurs du Bon Vieux Temps

In the second edition of his *Fabliaux ou contes*, Le Grand d'Aussy notes at the end of *Aucassin et Nicolette*: 'M. Sedaine a fait de ce Conte un Opéra

³³ Ibid. 58–59.

³⁴ The first edition was in 1772; see Astbury K., "Masculinity and Medievalism in the Tales of Baculard d'Arnaud", in Damian-Grint, *Medievalism and 'manière gothique'* 44–46. There is a certain similarity between Baculard's hero and heroine, Sargines and Sophie and Le Grand d'Aussy's presentation of the figures of Aucassin and Nicolette.

³⁵ 'sa douce amie qu'il aimait tant' is a phrase repeated (in the first person) several times in the Old French.

³⁶ Williamson John, Tales of the XIIth and XIIIth Centuries. From the French of Mr. Le Grand, 2 vols. (London, Thomas Egerton – Thomas Hookham – George Kearsley – G.G.J. & J. Robinson – J. Bew – William Sewel: 1786); Way Gregory Lewis, Fabliaux or Tales, Abridged from French Manuscripts of the XIIth and XIIIth Centuries by M. Le Grand (London, R. Faulder: 1796); Lückenmüller, Erzählungen aus dem 12ten und 13ten Jahrhundert von Le Grand, mit historischen und kritischen Anmerkungen (Hall, Friedrich Ruff: 1795–1798).

comique, qui a été représenté en 1779 à Versailles & à Paris'. ³⁷ Aucassin et Nicolette, ou Les mœurs du bon vieux temps, with music by Grétry and libretto by Sedaine, had a court première at Versailles in December 1779, with Clairval playing Aucassin and Mlle Dugazon as Nicolette; ³⁸ the following month it appeared at the Théâtre-Italien in Paris.

In many ways the play was a remarkable piece of work. Both Grétry and Sedaine had made a concerted effort to remain true to the spirit of the original (as presented in Sainte-Palaye's version); and in this they had succeeded only too well, for *Aucassin et Nicolette* aroused strong criticism for its 'gothic' (i.e. archaic) character and its too-realistic portrayal of medieval social norms and customs, which had the effect of disorienting the audience – as was shown by the guffaws that greeted the sentimental scenes of the operetta.³⁹ Inevitably, the play was immediately satirized in a three-act parody, *Marcassin et Tourlourette*.⁴⁰ 'J'avais pris la précaution de faire annoncer et afficher les mœurs du bon vieux temps', remarked Sedaine afterwards; 'cela ne m'a pas réussi, l'auditeur n'a pas voulu se transporter au douzième siècle'.⁴¹ So he and Grétry revised the piece to respond better to audience expectations, and it went on to become a solid success, with over 90 performances at the Théâtre-Italien by 1793.⁴²

³⁷ Le Grand d'Aussy, Fabliaux ou contes III, 62.

³⁸ In the *dramatis personæ* of the revised version, first staged at the Comédie-Italienne on 7 January 1782.

³⁹ On riait aux éclats, dans les endroits où *Sedaine* et moi avions cru les plus touchants', Grétry André-Ernest-Modeste, *Mémoires, ou Essais sur la musique* (Paris, Imprimerie de la République: 1797) I, 337.

⁴⁰ Performed at Versailles in April 1780 and published in Paris by Ballard, who had published the original: Brenner C.D., *A Bibliographical List of Plays in the French Language 1700–1789* (Berkeley: 1947 – New York: 1979), no. 1706; Brunet C., *Table des Pièces de Théâtre décrites dans le catalogue de la Bibliothèque de M. de Soleinne* (Paris: 1914), no. 3491. No copy of the parody is known to have survived.

⁴¹ Grétry André-Ernest-Modeste – Sedaine Michel-Jean, Aucassin et Nicolette, ou les Mœurs du bon vieux temps (Paris, Veuve Ballard: 1780) iii.

⁴² The revisions included the removal of some lines considered shocking and shortening the play from four acts to three. See Couvreur M., "D'Aucassin et Nicolette au Chevalier du Soleil", in Damian-Grint, Medievalism and 'manière gothique' 128–137. For the records, see Brenner C.D., The Theatre Italien: Its Repertory, 1716–1793, with a Historical Introduction (Berkeley – Los Angeles: 1961). It was also republished repeatedly: editions include Aucassin et Nicolette ou Les moeurs du bon vieux tems: comédie en trois actes representée pour la premiere fois, devant leurs Majestés à Versailles le 30 decembre 1779, par les Comédiens italiens ordinaires du Roi et à Paris le 3 janvier 1780, et reprise le 7 janvier 1782 (Paris, Houbaut – Lyon, Castaud: [1782]); Aucassin et Nicolette, ou, Les mœurs du bon vieux temps: comédie en trois actes, en vers, dont une partie est en musique: représentée pour la première fois par les Comédiens Italiens Ordinaires du Roi, le 7 janvier 1782 (Paris, Veuve Brunet: 1784). The 1784 edition

According to Manuel Couvreur, the key change in Grétry's revision was to recast the play in a form very close to that of the popular *pastorale*; the pastoral atmosphere, which is particularly noticeable in the second half of the play, provides a framework for the 'simplicity' and 'naïveté' of the medieval elements that is recognizable and acceptable to the audience.⁴³ This adaptation permitted the play to retain much of its 'gothic' character, as in the watchman's song to warn Nicolette:

Pucelle, avec un cœur franc, Au corps gentil, au corps plaisant, On voit bien à ton semblant, Que tu parles à ton amant; Garde-toi de ces Soldats méchans, Qui sous leur cape vont cachans Leurs glaives nus & trenchans (Act 2, scene 2).

This text is identical to Sainte-Palaye's translation; the only change Sedaine has made is to cut some lines. Sedaine's faithfulness to his original should not be exaggerated, however, as the song is the only piece of text to survive more or less untouched – with the exception of a single couplet:

Qui m'importe où nous irons Puisqu'ensemble nous allons ? (Act 3, scene 5).⁴⁴

The medieval atmosphere is nevertheless heavily stressed, both in the libretto and also in the music, which is often deliberately archaic – Grétry explicitly described it as 'gothique' when discussing the operetta in his memoirs. ⁴⁵ And Sedaine made a point of restoring some of the changes forced on him by audience reaction when it came to printing the libretto of the operetta, so that the 1782 published version

was repackaged in Recueil Général des Opéra Bouffons qui ont été représentée à Paris, avec les ariettes en musique, vol. XII (Liège, F.J. Desoer: 1785).

⁴³ 'La pastorale connaissant, durant la seconde moitié du dix-huitième siècle un succès incomparable, la deuxième partie de l'acte II et l'intégralité de l'acte III de l'Aucassin et Nicolette de Sedaine, dans sa version réduite, se dérouleront dans un climat de bergerie qui se conjugue ainsi à la couleur "gothique" de l'ensemble. La couleur primitive s'étendait ainsi de manière uniforme au caractère médiéval et au caractère pastoral, confusion subtile et qui, soigneusement entretenue, se révéla durable', Couvreur, "D'Aucassin et Nicolette au Chevalier du Soleil" 130.

⁴⁴ The couplet is put in italics in the published version, thus suggesting typographically that it is a quotation.

⁴⁵ Grétry, *Mémoires* I, 336; Grétry's music was not, however, based on genuine medieval tunes. See Charlton D., "Aucassin et Nicolette ou les mœurs du bon vieux temps" 192–194, 196.

of Aucassin et Nicolette, ou Les mœurs du bon vieux temps is closer in some respects to the rejected 1779 stage play than it is to what was being presented to Parisian audiences in the 1780s and 1790s.

Poem: Imbert's Choix de Fabliaux

A further adaptation of the fabliaux was signalled by Le Grand d'Aussy in the second edition of his *Fabliaux ou contes* when he noted that certain of his texts had been versified by the poet and playwright Barthélemy Imbert – although he was apparently unaware at that point that *Aucassin et Nicolette* was one of these.⁴⁶

Imbert's credentials as a medievalist were of recent origin: in 1778 he had joined Claude-Sixte Sautreau de Marsy as co-editor of the *Annales poétiques*, one of the many serial publications of extracts and translations of the period which included older texts in their remit, although the number of specifically medieval texts published in the series was small.⁴⁷ Nevertheless Le Grand d'Aussy's fabliaux had clearly fired his imagination, for a dozen of his verse versions of fabliaux appeared in the *Mercure de France* in the summer of 1780.⁴⁸ They were followed by a small collection of a further five poems – including *Aucassin et Nicolette* – under the title of *Fabliaux choisis, mis en vers* in 1785,⁴⁹ and

⁴⁶ Le Grand d'Aussy notes at the end of some fabliaux: 'Ce fabliau a été mis en vers par M. Imbert'. Imbert explains in his introduction that Le Grand d'Aussy had shown him the extra material he was preparing for his own second edition, so he was aware of Imbert's planned volume and presumably indicated the fabliaux that he knew Imbert was versifying. See *Journal des savants* (1830) avril, 203.

⁴⁷ Annales poétiques, ou Almanach des Muses depuis l'origine de la poésie françoise, 40 vols. (Paris, Paul Delalain: 1778–1788). Although the first volume of the collection included selections from the poetry of Charles d'Orléans and Thibault de Champagne, most volumes contain only material from the sixteenth century or later.

⁴⁸ Five fabliaux were published in July, three in August and four in September 1780; see Wilson, *A Medievalist in the Eighteenth Century* 300.

⁴⁹ [Imbert Barthélémy], Fabliaux choisis, mis en vers et suivis de l'histoire de Rosemonde (Amsterdam, François Belin: 1785). The poems were Aucassin et Nicolette, Auberée, Le Chevalier à l'épée, La Châtelaine de Vergy and Le Chevalier à La Trappe. This edition, which is anonymous, is sometimes attributed to L. Mathey de Marsilian or Claude-François-Xavier Mercier de Compiègne. Desessarts Nicolas-Toussaint-Lemoyne, Les Siècles littéraires de la France, ou Nouveau dictionnaire historique, critique et bibliographique de tous les écrivains français, morts et vivans jusqu'à la fin du XVIII siècle (Paris, Nicolas-Toussaint Lemoyne Dessessarts: 1800) III, 316, gives an earlier edition, Fabliaux choisis, mis en vers par M.
*** (Amsterdam – Paris, François Belin: 1782); but no notices of this edition appear elsewhere and there are no known copies of the book. Given the date, it is interesting that Imbert's poem at one point seems to refer to the United States when it talks of 'un

then a much larger (two-volume) and more complete Choix de fabliaux in 1788.50 In his introduction Imbert explains that his book is the result of a mere amusement to occupy him during a time of illness; if this is anything more than a topos, it may explain the rather uneven quality of the collection, and also why the shorter pieces are, by and large, better than the longer ones. 51 Although he pays lip-service to the idea of the scholarly or historical, rather than the literary, interest of medieval translations, 52 Imbert seems in fact to have been attracted to the fabliaux mainly for the possibilities they offered him as a poet. He uses hardly a quarter of the 230-odd fabliaux and contes in Le Grand d'Aussy's collection as material, but then adds to them 'quelques imitations de ce genre' composed by himself.⁵³ This rather disingenuous remark glosses over the fact that a significant proportion of the poems in volume 2 of his collection are his own work, and Imbert nowhere indicates which of the poems are based on medieval originals and which invented by himself; he appears to think that this insouciant mixing of original and pastiche is in no way problematic. And in this he may indeed have been correct.

'Aucassin et Nicolette, Poëme, ou Romance, en quatre parties', at just over 400 lines the longest poem in the book, is also one of the least successful. It is weak technically; the author's choice of octosyllabic huitains (ababcdcd), together with a flat-footed sense of rhythm, gives the poem a prosaic jog-trot that is at odds with the high register, ornate phraseology and pathos of the story itself. Imbert's unsure hand betrays itself in offences against both register (with sudden descents into a colloquial style) or grammar (with awkward or tangled syntax). The rhyme scheme also produces unintentional comedy when rhymes in -in or -ette lead to bathos, as in

⁵³ İbid. ix.

rivage,/ Où chez les hommes tous égaux,/ l'amant n'ait, dans son libre hommage,/ A redouter que ses rivaux' (vv. 269–272).

⁵⁰ Imbert Barthélémy, *Choix de fabliaux mis en vers*, 2 vols. (Geneva – Paris, Louis-François Prault: 1788): this edition contains 75 fabliaux and *contes*. Curiously, it did not include *La Châtelaine de Vergy*, which had appeared in the 1785 edition of *Fabliaux choisis*.

⁵¹ 'Ces imitations ne sont pas toutes heureuses, et plusieurs se ressentent de la manière un peu tourmentée de ce versificateur', Le Grand d'Aussy P.-J.-B., *Fabliaux ou contes*, 3rd ed. (Paris: 1829) I, "Avis de l'Éditeur" [A.-A. Renouard] v.

⁵² '[...] peut-être s'amusera-t-on de la lecture de ces Fabliaux, comme moi je me suis distrait en les écrivant: on y verra une esquisse de nos anciennes mœurs, qu'il n'est pas inutile de connoître', Imbert, *Fabliaux choisis* xii.

Mais de quoi serois-je inquiette? Et quel plus grand malheur enfin Peut arriver à Nicolette Que de ne plus voir Aucassin?

With all this, the poem itself is strictly conventional; the hero and heroine, largely passive, weep at every opportunity in the approved sentimental fashion. As Imbert's version was based on Le Grand d'Aussy's it was only natural that it should have kept the medieval framework but within a modernized form in which the *sensibilité* is heightened in keeping with readers' expectations: it was no doubt this, rather than its stylistic merits, which made for its (moderate) popularity with contemporary readers – Imbert's fabliaux were reprinted in 1795.⁵⁴

Extract: Bastide's Bibliothèque Universelle des Romans

Sainte-Palaye's translation was taken up again in 1784, when it appeared largely unchanged (and correctly credited) in the *Bibliothèque Universelle des Romans*.⁵⁵ The editor, probably Jean-François Bastide, is unreservedly enthusiastic about the text, which he introduces as being in 'le vieux langage', and adds rhetorically: 'Pourquoi demanderions-nous les traducteurs? Pourquoi circonscrire nos jouissances, nos connoissances?'⁵⁶ Bastide's enthusiasm for 'le vieux langage' is also very evident in his additions to Sainte-Palaye's text, which are in a blatantly archaized French – more 'vieux langage' in feel than Sainte-Palaye's, in fact, the effect being achieved both by archaic or pseudo-archaic terms ('brâmer le cerf qui court', 'le rossignol qui rossignoloit'),⁵⁷ and by the frequent dropping of definite and indefinite articles, particularly in direct speech:

Aucassin l'avoit vue, l'avoit ouie; Nicolete si bien lui avoit tenu doux langage. La derniere fois lui avoit dit: Sire Aucassin, si n'avois assez d'amour pour remplir le mien cœur, pourriez penser que vanité seroit

⁵⁴ Imbert Barthélémy, *Choix de Fabliaux, mis en vers*, 2 vols. (Paris, Pierre-Sébastien Le Prieur: 1795).

⁵⁵ Bastide Jean-François, "Aucassin et Nicolete", *Bibliothèque Universelle des Romans* (1784) octobre part I, 82–132; the text itself appears in 92–131. The main textual change is the addition of a short passage (109–110) in which Nicolete escapes from a savage dog.

⁵⁶ Ibid. 82–83.

⁵⁷ Ibid. 99, 106.

de moitié, dans le serment que vous fais de vous aimer toujours. Mais il est si vrai que tant vous aime, que ce n'est chose possible de faire entrer autre sentiment dans moi. Suis toute amour, & rien qu'amour. – Avez dit, lui répondit Aucassin, chose qu'allois vous dire. Serai, ma Nicolete, pour vous, tout amour, & rien qu'amour. – Quand on s'est tenu semblable langage, & quant on est bien certain de sa foi, on s'en va sans méfiance, & on n'a plus rien à se dire. ⁵⁸

Like previous editors, however, Bastide is careful not to reduce the readability of his text: his archaism is merely an aesthetic veneer, although it is applied with some care.

The passage quoted above indicates two other features of Bastide's text in addition to the archaizing tendency: a heavy emphasis on *sensibilité*, and a liking for little commentaries *ex personæ poetæ* to the reader – and in the latter case, he is careful to keep the archaic diction of the work as a whole, with the clear if unavowed intention of making his additions pass as part of the original text.

Oh si nos peres avoient nos yeux! si se méloient moins de notre fortune, sérions quelquefois moins contrariés dans notre bonheur, et seroient plus respectés.

Nicolete! faut aimer celles qui vous ressemblent; c'est moi qui le conseille à tout le monde. Ainsi soit fait.

Or, avisez, Damoiselles qui lirez ceci, le moyen qu'elle prit. Nicolete imagina chose que n'imagineriez plus. Il est vrai que les tems sont changés. Aujourd'hui ne faisons plus autant de cas des Jongleurs & des Menetriers que autrefois.⁵⁹

Thus Bastide picks up one of the key ideas in Sainte-Palaye's translation of *Aucassin et Nicolette* – the evocation of an atmosphere of ancient literature – and exaggerates it to the point that, instead of being an indication of keeping close to the original, it becomes an end in itself. Not that the readers of the *Bibliothèque Universelle des Romans* would much care; compared with the 'extraits infidèles et défigurés' (and sometimes even entirely fabricated texts)⁶¹ that so often appeared in the series, Bastide's version was a model of scholarly caution and accuracy.

⁵⁸ Ibid. 93.

⁵⁹ Ibid. 96, 108, 124.

⁶⁰ Le Grand d'Aussy, Fabliaux ou Contes (1781) I, lxxxvii.

⁶¹ Possibly the most notorious example was the invented *Chanson de Roland* in *Bibliothèque Universelle des Romans* (1777) décembre, 210–216, introduced by the comte de Tressan's casual avowal: 'sans recourir à la supposition d'un Manuscrit, dans lequel

Conclusion: Archaism and Sensibilité in Eighteenth-century Medievalism

Sainte-Palaye's publication of *Aucassin et Nicolette* has been seen by scholars as a crucial stage in the development of the French public's taste for medievalism, based on a new kind of vulgarization that is closely allied to genuine scholarship. ⁶² The success of Sainte-Palaye's version, followed by that of other versions both in print and on the stage, would thus act as a formative influence on public taste, educating readers into a more sophisticated understanding of medieval literature and pointing the way forward to the new vision of the Middle Ages that nineteenth-century Romanticism would bring. Yet this deproblematized picture in fact raises as many questions as it answers.

Perhaps the most difficult question to answer is why Sainte-Palaye published *Aucassin et Nicolette* at all. His well-publicized condescension towards Old French literature as primitive and artistically insignificant does not really square with his treatment of, and attitude towards, what was after all the only Old French text he ever published in its own right. His introduction to the text gives us no clues – indeed, it does not suggest that the text had any real attraction for him. Vet not only is his translation of *Aucassin et Nicolette* remarkably faithful to the original, but he also seems to have had something of a soft spot for it. Although the final form of *Les Amours du bon vieux tems* may well have owed more to Duchesne, the original idea of publishing the work must surely have been Sainte-Palaye's; and both Grétry and Sedaine

cette Chanson se trouveroit transcrite dans son langage original, imaginons plutôt quel pouvoit en être le sens et le goût [...]'.

⁶² See Jacoubet H., Le Comte de Tressan et les origines du genre troubadour (Paris: 1923) 172–173.

⁶³ Three short Old French verse texts, the *Voeu du héron*, the *Dit des trois chevaliers et del canise* and *Les Honneurs du cour*, appeared as supporting material within Sainte-Palaye's *Mémoires sur l'ancienne chevalerie* (Paris, Nicolas-Bonaventure Duchesne: 1759). It will be remembered that in his decades of research Sainte-Palaye amassed thousands of pages of extracts and transcriptions from Old French manuscripts, yet everything else went to swell the folders of source material for his *mémoires* and his projected (but never completed) *Glossaire de l'ancienne langue françoise* and *Dictionnaire des antiquités françoises*.

⁶⁴ Bastide makes the following statement at the end of his version of *Aucassin et Nicolette* (131): 'M. Lacurne de Sainte-Palaye, qui, durant sa vie, s'est si utilement occupé de la Chevalerie, & des Troubadours, avoit *historié* cette Romance; il l'avoit écrite pour cette même Princesse de Beaujolois, pour qui M. de Mirabaud, Secrétaire de l'Académie Françoise, avoit écrite son alphabet de la Fée gracieuse'. It is not clear where Bastide's information comes from.

acknowledge his role in suggesting the story to them as the basis for their operetta;⁶⁵ there is even the intriguing possibility that he may have done something similar in the case of Mlle de Lubert.

It is true that all this can be seen as no more than a manifestation of Sainte-Palaye's wider interest in popularizing Old French texts: he is explicitly indicated as the moving force behind the modernized version of the *fabliaux* by his disciple Le Grand d'Aussy, ⁶⁶ and the editors of the *Bibliothèque Universelle des Romans* likewise acknowledge that 'M. de Sainte-Palaie [...] nous a ouvert les trésors de son cabinet, & nous a procuré le moyen d'en tirer parti'. ⁶⁷ Sainte-Palaye makes no secret of the fact that he was interested in reaching the general reading public. Perhaps he simply felt that of all the short Old French texts he had come across, *Aucassin et Nicolette* was particularly well suited to attracting a contemporary audience. If that was so, the variety of versions and adaptations the tale underwent over the years is proof enough that he was right.

A second problem with the standard view is that the relationship between scholarship and vulgarization that it posits for eighteenth-century medievalism is hard to see in the publishing history of *Aucassin et Nicolette*. The changes and adaptations of the tale over the course of the century suggest, rather, the difficulty – or even impossibility – of drawing a rigid distinction between medievalism as reception and medievalism as imitation: between the preservation and scholarly care of the texts (art, music, theatre...) of the Middle Ages and the different kinds of modern artistic creation that evoke the Middle Ages in some way. From its first introduction to eighteenth-century readers and audiences, *Aucassin et Nicolette* is consistently both an authentic medieval text *and* a pseudo-medieval text. Sainte-Palaye's 'close adaptation' in reality leaves not a phrase untouched; conversely Mlle Lubert's *conte de fées*, for all its fairies and centaurs, can nonetheless be described by its modern editor as an 'adaptation fidèle' of *Aucassin et Nicolette*.⁶⁸ And

⁶⁵ Grétry in his *Mémoires* I, 336–337; Sedaine in the introduction to the 1780 edition of *Aucassin et Nicolette*, ou les Mœurs du bon vieux temps iii.

⁶⁶ The editors of the *Bibliothèque Universelle des Romans* (1777) février, 87, give Sainte-Palaye the role of general editor of the project when they refer to it as 'un Recueil que l'illustre Académicien [Sainte-Palaye] fait composer sous ses yeux'; Le Grand d'Aussy himself gives Sainte-Palaye the role rather of facilitator. See Wilson, *A Medievalist in the Eighteenth Century* 7–8; Gossman, *Medievalism* 329.

⁶⁷ Bibliothèque Universelle des Romans (1777) février, 45.

⁶⁸ Lubert, "Étoilette" in Zygel-Basso, Contes 550.

Imbert's 'Aucassin et Nicolette' – another faithful adaptation, at least by eighteenth-century standards – sits cheek-by-jowl with a dozen or more medieval pastiches by the same author, with no indication as to which is the real and which the fake.

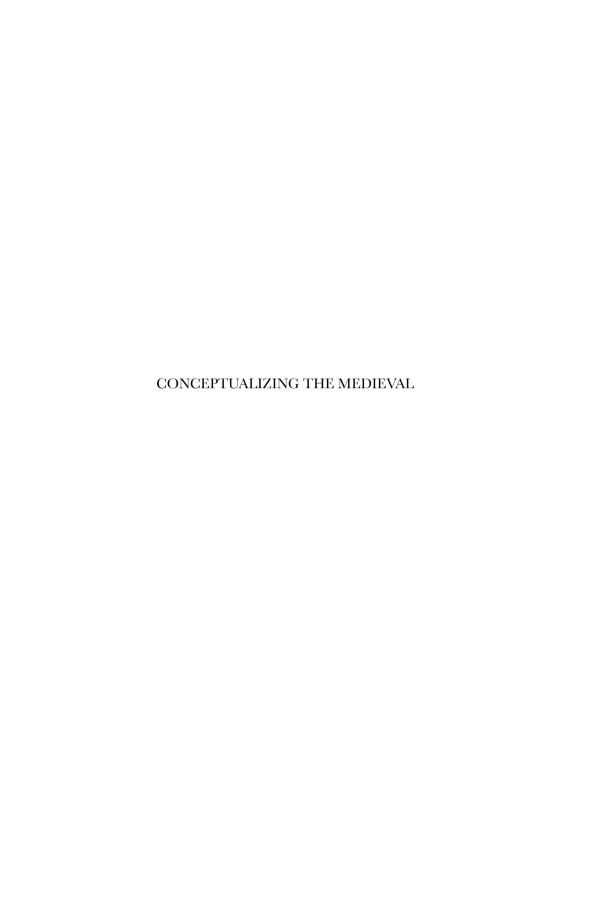
Seen from this angle, the archaism and sensibilité which appear so consistently in the presentation of Aucassin et Nicolette to eighteenthcentury readers and audiences suddenly look far more like a natural response to the thirteenth-century love story. For the modern reader, there is something almost perverse in the attitude of adaptors who consciously heighten the archaic feel of the story, while simultaneously in fact modernizing the material itself and adding a startlingly and unnecessarily anachronistic sensibilité to a love story that has quite evidently no need of eighteenth-century sentiment. But the archaizing of form and the modernizing of matter are merely complementary ways of exploring the original medieval text within an eighteenth-century aesthetic in which the aim is to make the tale both more comprehensible and more acceptable to the intended audience. If we have the tendency to contrast the more sober and austere work of the scholars – Sainte-Palaye, Le Grand d'Aussy, even Bastide at a pinch - with the flamboyance of Mlle Lubert, Imbert, Grétry and Sedaine, we are reading in a contrast that the authors in question would almost certainly have rejected: at most one can identify a range of adaptations, in keeping with the range of intended readers and audiences. The multifarious eighteenth-century guises of Aucassin et Nicolette are all eminently literary rewritings of a literary text.

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'COVERED IN THE THICKEST DARKNESS OF FORGETFULNESS': HUMANIST COMMONPLACES AND THE DEFENCE OF MEDIEVALISM IN JANUS DOUSA'S METRICAL HISTORY (1599)*

Coen Maas

In 1599, Janus Dousa the Elder published his metrical work of history about the medieval past of his native Holland. It may seem surprising that on the very first page of this book, the reader encounters the familiar humanist stereotype of the Middle Ages as a dark age:

I have eagerly exerted myself in order to display the events that were removed farthest from the memory of our days, and which lay covered in the thickest darkness of forgetfulness and ignorance, trying their patterns by the whetstone of probability, on the basis of historical rather than rhetorical credibility.¹

It strikes me as rather curious that the beginning of a book – the most obvious place to recommend its subject – features such an unfavourable description of its theme.

Moreover, playing down the subject's significance is evidently not the rhetorical strategy adopted here, because the Middle Ages are not presented as a matter of minor importance. Rather, there appears to be a contradiction between the unfavourable depiction of the book's subject and the painstaking labour required to produce it. Dousa never trivializes the seriousness of his work, but consistently depicts it as

^{*} I wish to thank Bettina Reitz and Maarten Jansen for their careful review of this article and their helpful suggestions.

Dousa Sr Janus, Annales rerum a priscis Hollandiae comitibus per GCC.XLVI. Annos gestarum continuata serie memoriam complectentes. Nunc primitus in unum metricae Historiae Corpus redacti, atque in X. Libros tributi ac dispartiti (The Hague, Aelbrecht Hendricksz: 1599) fol. *ij r, 'adnisus sum sedulo, quo videlicet res ab aevi nostri memoria remotissimas, ac spississimis Oblivionis pariter atque Ignorantiae tenebris involutas, exacta ad Probabilitatis cotem ratione, Historica potius quam Rhetorica fide repraesentarem'. For the metaphor of darkness, also see fol. **v, 'Orco'; ****ij v, 'caliginosa nocte ac spississimis tenebris'; *****iij r, 'noctis silentio'; p. 29, 'caligine'; 79, 'obscura nocte'. The most comprehensive study of this imagery is Varga L., Das Schlagwort vom "finsteren Mittelalter", Veröffentlichungen des Seminars für Wirtschafts- und Kulturgeschichte an der Universität Wien 8 (Baden bei Wien: 1932).

the fruit of unremitting diligence: 'I left nothing unexamined, nothing unexplored, if it could provide a supplement to history and instruct and educate me with some knowledge of ancient times'.²

All in all, the passage raises the question of the connection between early modern conventional thought about the Middle Ages on the one hand and the justification of humanist medievalist practices on the other. Their uneasy combination will be the main issue addressed in this paper; Janus Dousa's historiography will be my test case.

Janus Dousa the Elder (1545–1604) was one of the foremost Neolatin poets and philologists of the late sixteenth century. He wrote various collections of Latin epigrams, odes, elegies, and satires; he compiled editions, commentaries, and collections of text-critical remarks for Sallust, Horace, Catullus, Tibullus, Petronius, and Sulpicia, and contributed to the philological work of his sons on Plautus and Lucilius. In addition, Dousa was a figure of considerable importance on the political scene of the Republic of the Seven United Netherlands, which in 1568 had successfully broken away from its Habsburg king, Philip II of Spain. In 1574, Dousa was charged with the defence of the city of Leiden against the troops of the duke of Alva. When the siege was raised, it was decided that a university should be founded in the city. As a reward for his efforts, Dousa became a member of the new university's board. In the years 1584 and 1585, he participated in embassies to queen Elizabeth of England. In 1591, he was appointed a member of the Supreme Court.3

In the *Annales rerum a priscis Hollandiae comitibus gestarum*, the work that will be discussed in this paper, Dousa describes the history of Holland from 841 until 1207 in Latin elegiac distichs. Until the publi-

² Dousa, *Annales rerum gestarum* fol. **ij v, '[...] nihil inexcussum, nihil inexploratum reliquimus, quod modo ad Historiae facere supplementum; nosque aliqua Vetustatis notitia instruere atque erudire posset'.

³ For the biographical facts, see Heesakkers C.L., Praecidanea Dousana. Materials for a Biography of Janus Dousa Pater (1545–1604): His Youth (Amsterdam: 1976); Heesakkers C.L. – Reinders W.M.S., Genoeglijk bovenal zijn mij de Muzen. De Leidse Neolatijnse dichter Janus Dousa (1545–1604), Leidse opstellen 19 (Leiden: 1993); Vermaseren B.A., "De werkzaamheid van Janus Dousa Sr († 1604) als geschiedschrijver van Holland", Bijdragen en mededelingen van het Historisch Genootschap 69 (1955) 49–107; Blok P.J. – Molhuysen P.C. (eds.), Nieuw Nederlandsch biografisch woordenboek, 10 vols. (Leiden: 1911–1937) vol. VI, 425–429. Dousa himself describes the main outlines of political career up to 1593 in Dousa Janus, Epistolae apologeticae duae, quarum priore de prolata Annalium suorum Editione Auctor se purgat, altera pro Praetore Nortvicano, Peregrinitatis in Batavis reo, Causae-dictionem complectitur (Leiden, Christophorus Raphelengius: 1593) 3–10.

cation of Dousa's works, knowledge about these centuries, when Holland was still a more or less independent county within the Frankish kings' sphere of influence, was only readily accessible in late medieval and early humanist works printed in the Low Countries under the Burgundian-Habsburgian regime; the newly founded Republic of the Seven United Netherlands did not yet have historiography of its own.⁴ Under these circumstances, the university of Leiden in 1585 commissioned Dousa to write a new prose history of Holland. This prose work was published in 1601; the metrical work of history, which will be examined in this article, was a product of the same historical inquiries and had been released two years before.⁵

Both of Dousa's works of history are the result of immense erudition and scholarly punctiliousness, bold experiments with literary form, and highly self-conscious rewritings of the historiographical tradition. They have been praised as a vital catalyst for progress in Dutch historiography.⁶ Herman Kampinga, for instance, called Dousa a 'pathfinder in the field of scholarly historical investigation'.⁷

Rhetoric and Commonplaces

Dousa's metrical *Annales* are prefaced by two letters to the States of Holland in which he defends his historiographical programme. The first is a formal dedication, the second is a short treatise about the close ties between poetry and historiography. This elaborate self-justification offers ample opportunity to find out in what ways conventional — and usually derogatory — ideas about the Middle Ages could be incorporated into a defence of medievalism.

The main purpose of this investigation is to try out a fresh approach to humanist conceptualizations of the Middle Ages. Since this issue

⁴ For the development of historiography in Holland, see Kampinga H., *De opvattingen over onze oudere vaderlandsche geschiedenis bij de Hollandsche historici der XVIe en XVIIe eeuw* (The Hague: 1917).

⁵ For Dousa's commission to write a history of Holland, see Vermaseren, "De werkzaamheid" 58.

⁶ Kampinga, De opvattingen 25–37. Cf. Waterbolk E.H., Twee eeuwen Friese geschiedschrijving. Opkomst, bloei en verval van de Friese historiografie in de zestiende en zeventiende eeuw (Groningen: 1952) 193–194, 201.

⁷ Kampinga, *De opvattingen* 25, 'padvinder voor de wetenschappelijke geschiedvorsching'.

was broached almost a century ago by the German medievalist Paul Lehmann,⁸ two major observations have been made. In the first place, it has become clear that at least until the end of the sixteenth century, there was hardly any consensus about the idea of an intermediate period in history as regards its chronological boundaries, its cultural characteristics, and the terminology used to denote it.⁹ Secondly, it has been demonstrated convincingly that medievalist practices such as historiography, text edition, and the formation of collections as well as the analytical categories used in such approaches to the Middle Ages can be situated in and were determined by political and religious contexts such as the patriotism of the Italian city states, the defence of the Reformation, and the conflicts of the French wars of religion.¹⁰

⁸ Lehmann P., Vom Mittelalter und von der lateinischen Philologie des Mittelalters, Quellen und Untersuchungen zur lateinischen Philologie des Mittelalters 5.1 (Munich: 1914).

⁹ This idea was first expressed by Lehmann, Vom Mittelalter 10–11; see also Ferguson W.K., "Humanist Views of the Renaissance", American Historical Review 45 (1939) 1-28, at 28; Garin E., "Medio Evo e tempi bui: concetto e polemiche nella storia del pensiero dal XV al XVIII secolo", in Branca V. (ed.), Concetto, storia, miti e immagini del medio evo. XIV Corso internazionale di cultura, Venezia 2–23 sett. 1972 (Florence: 1973) 199– 224, at 208–211; Mertens D., "Mittelalterbilder in der Frühen Neuzeit", in Althoff G. (ed.), Die Deutschen und ihr Mittelalter. Themen und Funktionen moderner Geschichtsbilder vom Mittelalter (Darmstadt: 1992) 29-54, at 31. Nathan Edelman states it is possible to identify a common factor in early modern concepts of the Middle Ages: Edelman N., "The Early Uses of Medium Aevum, Moyen Age, Middle Ages", Romanic Review 29 (1938) 3-25, at 24-25; id., "Other Early Uses of Moyen Age and Moyen temps", Romanic Review 30 (1939) 327–330, at 330. However, extensive lists of attestations of the term 'Middle Ages' and its varying uses - even those of Edelman himself - testify to a profound diversity of meanings: Gordon G., Medium aevum and the Middle Age, Society for Pure English Tract 19 (Oxford: 1925); Edelman "The Early Uses"; id., "Other Early Uses"; id., Attitudes of Seventeenth-Century France toward the Middle Ages (New York: 1946) 1–11; Neddermeyer U., Das Mittelalter in der deutschen Historiographie von 15. bis zum 18. Jahrhundert. Geschichtsgliederung und Epochenverständnis in der frühen Neuzeit, Kölner historische Abhandlungen 34 (Cologne-Vienna: 1988) 245-265.

¹⁰ Lehmann, Vom Mittelalter 14–16, 19, does already point to the importance of confessionalization for the rise of medievalist practices; the importance of their political and religious embedment has been worked out in more detail by Edelman, Attitudes 44–55; Fumaroli M., "Aux origines de la connaissance historique du Moyen Age: humanisme, réforme et gallicanisme", XVII siècle. Bulletin de la Société d'Etude du XVII siècle 114–115 (1977) 5–29; Wolfzettel F., "Die antiquités gauloises und die humanistische Konstruktion des Mittelalters im französischen 16. Jahrhundert", in Segl P. (ed.), Mittelalter und Moderne. Entdeckung und Rekonstruktion der mittelalterlichen Welt. Kongreβakten des 6. Symposiums des Mediävistenverbandes in Bayreuth 1995, Mittelalter und Moderne 6 (Sigmaringen: 1997) 229–241. For the dependence of conceptualization on political and religious context, see Nordström J., Moyen âge et Renaissance. Essai historique (Paris: 1933) 15–21; Falco G., La polemica sul medioevo, Quaderni di critica storica 4, 2nd ed. (Naples: 1974); Garin, "Medio evo"; Mertens, "Mittelalterbilder"; the idea is omnipresent in Varga, Das Schlagwort, as well.

Most of these studies show a tendency to surpass their respective predecessors by piling up a larger heap of evidence. The culmination of this development were the massive collections of data gathered by Jürgen Voss and Uwe Neddermeyer. What is lost to sight in such huge accumulations of material is the fact that terms and concepts were not only shaped by the broad context of political and religious developments outside the world of books, but they were also subordinated and adjusted to the rhetoric of the specific text of which they are part. I regard periodizations as constructs that divide the past in a convenient manner and that are often tuned to highly individual arguments, especially when there is no general agreement about the application of a specific schema.

Rather than giving a static inventory of humanist commonplaces about the Middle Ages found in Dousa's work, I will therefore show how *loci communes* could be moulded and employed in a particularly versatile and productive manner within the persuasive design of a historical monograph. This will illustrate how the fluidity and political embeddedness of the concept 'Middle Ages' formed the bedrock of medievalist rhetoric and what kind of strategies and *topoi* could be effective for reconciling the paradoxical combination of contempt and curiosity that was so central to early modern medievalism.

This approach to commonplaces is prompted by the Latin rhetorical tradition, which played a key role in shaping humanist practices of writing. This tradition offers a concept of the *locus communis* as a readily available argument that can be applied to many different cases. Often, this comes down to what we would call a 'cliché'. Put somewhat more technically, a commonplace constitutes a commonly recurring major premise that can be used to construct convincing syllogisms. It follows from this idea that a commonplace is employed inappropriately if it is, in Quintilian's words, 'tacked onto rather than interwoven in the texture' of the discourse.¹² In this line of thought, it seems only natural

¹¹ Voss J., Das Mittelalter im historischen Denken Frankreichs. Untersuchungen zur Geschichte des Mittelalterbegriffes und der Mittelalterbewertung von der zweiten Hälfte des 16. bis zur Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts (Munich: 1972); Neddermeyer, Das Mittelalter.

¹² The quotation is from Quintilian, *Institutio oratoria* 2.4.30, 'non tam insertum quam adplicitum'. For the commonplace in classical rhetoric, see Leff M., "Commonplaces and Argumentation in Cicero and Quintilian", *Argumentation: An International Journal on Reasoning* 10 (1996) 445–452; Moss A., *Printed Commonplace-Books and the Structuring of Renaissance Thought* (Oxford: 1996) 3–12. The reception of classical ideas on commonplaces in early modern treatises on rhetoric can be exemplified by

not just to catalogue repeatedly expressed views on the Middle Ages, but to analyse their rhetorical function within particular texts as well.

Temporal Boundaries

In order to given an overview of Dousa's ideas about the Middle Ages, I will begin my investigation of how unfavourable commonplaces can be intertwined in a rhetoric of self-justification by clarifying the temporal demarcations of the medieval in the *Annales*. Although Dousa never treats his periodization of history explicitly, it is possible to detect a relatively clear-cut terminology. To denote the Middle Ages, the terms *media aetas* and *medium tempus* are used. As these expressions are used only to classify historians and their work, they seem to principally designate a period in literary history. It thus appears that for Dousa, *media aetas* is first of all a philological category.¹³

Usually, however, Dousa refers both to the writings and to other aspects of the Middle Ages by vaguer phrases such as 'that era' (*illud aevum*). One might suspect that by using periphrases like the one cited and by resorting to terms otherwise used to indicate classical antiquity (*antiquitas, vetustas*), Dousa is deliberately avoiding the term 'Middle Ages' in order to neutralize some of its unfavourable connotations. The predominant habit of referring to the Middle Ages indirectly – *media aetas* and *medium tempus* seem to occur only three times in Dousa's metrical history – thwarts easy attempts to reconstruct the

the influential works of Rudolph Agricola and Philipp Melanchthon: Mundt L. (ed.), Rudolf Agricola. De inventione dialectica libri tres. Drei Bücher über die Inventio dialectica, Frühe Neuzeit 11 (Tübingen: 1992) 324; Wels V. (ed.) Philipp Melanchthon. Elementa rhetorices. Grundbegriffe der Rhetorik, Bibliothek seltener Texte in Studienausgaben 7 (Berlin: 2001) 138–148.

¹³ Dousa, Annales rerum gestarum fol. ***ij r, p. 37, 220. There has been some debate about the question whether a literary or a historical orientation characterized the original meaning of the term in humanist discourse: Lehmann, Vom Mittelalter 9–11; Gordon, Medium aevum 14–19; Huizinga J., "Een schakel in de ontwikkeling van de term Middeleeuwen?", Verzamelde werken (Haarlem: 1948–1953) vol. IV, 433–440, at 433–434; Edelman, "The Early Uses" 11–14, 24–25; Schaeffer P., "The Emergence of the Concept 'Medieval' in Central European Humanism', Sixteenth Century Journal 7.2 (1976) 21–30. A distinction between political and cultural approaches to periodization is made by Ferguson, "Humanist Views"; Rubinstein N., "Il Medio Evo nella storiografia italiana del Rinascimento", in Branca V. (ed.), Concetto, storia, miti e immagini del medio evo. XIV Corso internazionale di cultura, Venezia 2–23 sett. 1972 (Florence: 1973) 429–448, at 429–433.

¹⁴ For the use of alternative expressions to denote the Middle Ages, see Gordon, *Medium aevum* 15–16; Edelman, *Attitudes* 10–12; Wolfzettel, "Die *antiquités gauloises*" 232.

periodization Dousa had in mind. Consequently, some further analysis of Dousa's terminology is needed in order to retrieve the precise range various expressions cover.

Dousa consistently distinguishes between older and recent writers (*scriptores*). The archetypal representatives of the first class are the annals of the monastery of Egmond (written between 1120 and 1205) and the *Chronographia* of Johannes de Beke (written around 1350); they are supplemented with a number of charters from archives. The material roughly spans the period from the tenth to the fourteenth century. Its age is denoted by such words as *antiquus* ('old, ancient'), *vetustus* ('aged, old'), *priscus* ('belonging to former times, ancient'), or *cascus* ('old, old-fashioned'). The earliest writer of the second, recent (*recens*) category is Johannes à Leydis, a historian who flourished in the second half of the fifteenth century. The other members of this class are spread evenly over the time between the activity of à Leydis and that of Dousa himself.¹⁵ At one point, Dousa suggests that the reign of Charles the Bold (1467–1477) constitutes the turning point between the older and the recent period of historiography.¹⁶

An identification of the class of older writings with Dousa's concept of the Middle Ages is suggested by a passage in which an opposition is created between the recent author Reinier Snoy (c. 1477–1537) and the ancient charters of the *medium tempus*.¹⁷ The idea that the period explicitly indicated as 'Middle Ages' coincides with the activity of the older generation of historians is confirmed by Dousa's prose history, published in 1601, in which the sources from the category of older writings are explicitly referred to as *mediae aetatis historiographi* several times.¹⁸

¹⁵ Dousa, *Annales rerum gestarum* 11, 13, 42, 56, 57, 74, 75. See Edelman, *Attitudes* 6–10, for other temporal delimitations of the Middle Ages by humanists.

¹⁶ Dousa, Annales rerum gestarum 23, 'Quae si vera putas, Membranas consule, & ante/ Carli aevum prisca si qua notata manu' ('If you think these things are true, you should consult parchment manuscripts and writings that have been produced before the age of Charles'). In the margins, this Charles is identified as Charles the Bold. 'Manuscripts on parchment' refers to 'old manuscripts', since paper became widely available only in the fifteenth century. A few years before the publication of the Annales, Dousa had identified Jacqueline of Bavaria's lifetime (1401–1436) as the turning point: Spiegel Hendrik Laurensz. (ed.), Hollandtsche rim-kroniik inhoudende de gheschiedenissen der graven van Hollandt tot het iaer M. CCC. V. door enen wiens naeme noch onbekent is, voor 286. iaren beschreven (Amsterdam, Barent Adriaensz: 1591) fol. (:)iij v.

¹⁷ Dousa, *Annales rerum gestarum* 37. Snoy is explicitly referred to as a recent historian ('nuperum Patriae nostrae Chronologum') on p. 4.

¹⁸ Dousa Sr Janus – Dousa Jr Janus, Bataviae Hollandiaeque Annales, a Iano Dousa filio Concepti atque inchoati iam olim, nunc vero a Patre eidem cognomine ac superstite, Nordovici Domino,

The Wasteland of Medieval History

Although Dousa does not deny the trustworthiness of these medieval historians, he does haul them over the coals for being selfish and indolent. He complains bitterly about the lack of material he has to deal with. In his view, the shortage of sources is due to medieval monks' laziness in general and to their inclination to retain only documents which were of interest to their Church in particular.¹⁹ 'The spirit of my fatherland will forgive me: for why should I plead in defence of monkish idleness? Or why should the negligence of others be to my detriment, if the sacred order failed in its duty?'.²⁰

In some passages, however, Dousa does offer medieval historians something of an excuse for their failure to produce satisfactory historiography. He suggests that 'among our ancestors, the most vigorous men were inclined to perform praiseworthy deeds rather than to praise the feats of other men. And in this respect at least, nothing but the misfortune of their days can be held against them'. To this argument, repeated a few times, Dousa adds the excuse that many sources have been destroyed by flood, fire, and plundering.

Nevertheless, the net result of all these factors was, according to Dousa, a complete lack of knowledge concerning medieval history. He thought that the situation had not exactly improved by the activity of the class of recent historians, to whom he refers as 'storytellers' (*aretalogi*). To his mind, they were just 'that lying and fickle host of writers'.²⁴ He was not at all taken with their way of compensating for

supremi Concilii Adsessore, tum Archivorum in Batavis custodiae Praefecto, recogniti, suppleti, nouaque octo librorum accessione ad integrae usque Decadis finem perducti et continuati (Leiden, Christophorus Raphelengius: 1601) 57, 92, 141–142, 214, 218, 220, 350–351.

Dousa, Annales rerum gestarum fol. ****ij r-v, ****iij r, p. 28-29, 93.

²⁰ Ibid. 28, 'Ignoscet Patriae Genius mihi: pro Monachali/ Nam quid opus causam dicere desidia?/ Aut mihi cur fuerit aliena incuria fraudi,/ Defuit officio si sacer Ordo suo?'.

²¹ Ibid. fol. *iiij v_*** r, '[...] apud Majores nostros strennuissimum quemque potius laudanda facere, quam ut ipse aliorum facta laudaret, animatum fuisse. Atque illis quidem, hac in parte utique, nihil praeter temporum suorum infaelicitatem obiici potest'. The argument and part of its wording are drawn from Sallust, *Bellum Catilinae* 8. The idea that the past cannot be judged by modern standards has its parallels in other medievalist studies: Edelman, *Attitudes* 40–41.

²² For instance, Dousa, Annales rerum gestarum fol. ***iiij r, ****iii r-v, p. 29.

²³ Ibid. fol. **** v-***ij r.

²⁴ Ibid. 74, 'Scriptorum mendax levisque manus'; a marginal note identifies these writers unmistakably as recent historians ('recentium Aretalogorum').

the lack of historical data: he reprimands them over and over again for adding implausible details to the story as given in the sources or even for making up entire episodes:²⁵

This is what I would wish, since Snoy and others intended to interweave falsehoods with truth: that at least they would have set their mind on lying fitly and on finding some framework for their fabrications; that is, on pleasing the reader with the appearance of truth and on disguising their deceit.²⁶

Walking the Untrodden Path

Dousa's lucid organization of the history of historiography, his emphasis on the dearth of early sources, and his aggressive attacks on his immediate predecessors are clearly related to a rhetorical attempt at self-justification. The depiction of medieval history as a wasteland covered by a veil of oblivion allows him to present his efforts to assemble the scattered scraps of historical evidence as the illumination of the history of Holland.²⁷ More importantly, the repeated demonstrations that the methods of more recent predecessors were positively objectionable vindicate the claim that Dousa's own work is groundbreaking. Thus Dousa considers himself entitled to conclude that 'after Willem Heda, a writer of the greatest accuracy and diligence, I am the very first to walk along this path, which has not been seen by others until now, nor has it been trodden or beaten'. 28 In this way, Dousa's emphasis on the scarcity of the sources and on the serious flaws in recent historical scholarship offers him an opportunity to assert his right to the position of pathfinder in the field of historiography – a claim recognized, as we saw, by Kampinga.

²⁵ Ibid. fol. ****iiij r, p. 11, 13, 16, 19–20, 21, 24, 41–42, 74, 75.

²⁶ Ibid. 21, 'Hoc tamen optarim, falsa intertexere veris/ Propositum quoniam Snoio aliisque fuit,/ Saltem uti concinne mentiri animum induxissent,/ Figmentisque aliquod quaerere schema suis:/ Scilicet et Veri specie oblectare legentem,/ Et fraudes fuco dissimulare suas'.

²⁷ For this metaphor of light, see ibid. fol. *ij r, 'Veritatis Lucem'; ** v, 'lucem'; p. 62, 'die medio', 'lucidiora', 'solis radij'; Vermaseren, "De werkzaamheid" 86, 'purpurae lumen'.

²⁸ Dousa, *Annales rerum gestarum* fol. **** v, 'Primi inquam post Guillelmum Hedam, accuratissimae diligentiae Scriptorem, huncce callem insistimus; nec visum quidem aliis hactenus; nedum calcatum, vel tritum'; cf. Vermaseren, "De werkzaamheid" 106, Dousa, *Annales rerum gestarum* fol. ****iiij v.

Dousa's arrangement of previous historiographers is more than just a vehicle for self-fashioning, though. It also cleared the ground for the introduction of a new methodology in the study of the medieval past of Holland. The suggestion that the alleged inferiority of medieval works of history should be imputed to the spirit of the age was important in this respect, because this move turned the Middle Ages into a closed period with its own peculiar characteristics and, consequently, its writings into objects of philological scrutiny. Indeed, the main feature of Dousa's revisionary historiography is its abundant use of the procedures of contemporary classical scholarship, such as textual criticism, chronology, and etymology. Since medieval historiography lacked the authority of classical authors, there were fewer obstacles to a particularly radical philological critique of these writings.²⁹

Barbarous Words and Latin Elegance

Dousa's opinion about medieval historians was not confined to the observation that the sheer volume of their output was so limited. He also noted their shortcomings in terms of quality: the men who did take the trouble to write works of history usually distinguished themselves by their uncouth style and clumsy composition. Dousa's judgement about the German, French, and British medieval historians reads as follows:

And yet most of them are unskilled and disorderly in their narrations: I do not deny it. But they are of firm intellect, and they are remarkable for their sound judgement and historical reliability rather than for the refinement of splendid language. For the allurement of words and the blossom of sentences may well seem to be absent from their times rather than from themselves.³⁰

²⁹ Cf. Huppert G., "The Renaissance Background of Historicism", *History and Theory* 5 (1966) 48–60, at 54: 'Here, in this uncharted territory, free from the oppressive authority of the classical historians, a man could turn to the sources of history and listen to their halting, rudimentary voices'.

³⁰ Dousa, *Annales rerum gestarum* fol. ****ijj r-v, 'Rudes tamen plaerique ipsorum in narrationibus atque incompositi: haud nego. At ingenio validi, at judicio sani et Historica fide potius, quam splendidae orationis cultu spectabiles. Etenim verborum lenocinia, ac sententiarum flosculi magis videri possunt temporibus, quam ipsis defuisse'. Also see fol. ***ijj v, p. 29. Dousa, *Bataviae Hollandiaeque Annales* 90, speaks explicitly about 'those unskilled and semi-Latin historians of the Middle Ages' ('rudibus & semi-latinis illis mediae Aetatis Historiographis'). The most detailed instance of a stylistic

Even though 'disorderly' historical narratives could be rewritten in humanist fashion, medieval history was still notorious for endangering a work of history's level of literary refinement. From Bruni and Valla on, it had been frequently discussed whether indigenous names and words of medieval origin should be regarded a threat to an elegant Latin style.³¹ In the preface to his history, Dousa seems to humbly acknowledge the problem.³² Yet once the first book is underway, this humility turns out to be false modesty. Faced with the practical difficulties of avoiding unclassical names and expressions, Dousa assumes a defiant attitude: 'For what can hold me back from using barbarous words?'.³³

This rhetorical question sets the tone for Dousa's medievalist programme, which avails itself of the vernacular in a gesture of insubordination to rigid classicism. Dousa devotes numerous passages to the etymology of vernacular names.³⁴ Moreover, he shows no hesitance in turning Middle Dutch sources to his advantage. In fact, his regard for this material was so high that when the first edition of an important verse chronicle of Holland in the vernacular appeared in 1591,

critique of a medieval writer is Dousa's evaluation of the verse chronicle by Melis Stoke (1235–1305): Dousa, *Annales rerum gestarum* fol. ***iij r. Also see Vermaseren, "De werkzaamheid" 86.

³¹ Hankins J. (ed.), *Leonardo Bruni: History of the Florentine People* (Cambridge, MA: 2001–2007) vol. I, 2; Besomi O. (ed.), *Laurentii Valle Gesta Ferdinandi regis Aragonum*, Thesaurus mundi 10 (Padua: 1973) 10–13. Also see the work of Flavio Biondo: Blondus Flavius, *Historiarum ab inclinatione romanorum imperii decades* (Venice, Octavianus Scotus: 1483) fol. F r–Fii r (the beginning of the third decade).

Dousa, Annales rerum gestarum fol. **iij r, 'materiae ipsius incredibili obscuritate multisque tricis involutae difficultas, ornatioris Eloquentiae artificium raro et quidem aegre admittens' ('the difficulty caused by the very material, which is covered in incredible obscurity and lots of nonsense, allows for the art of more delicate eloquence only rarely and indeed reluctantly'); Dousa goes on to give a number of reasons for this situation, among which 'barbarae fere cum locorum, tum personarum appellationes, quarum horror atque asperitas, ipsa paene timenda Sono, fastidioso Poëticarum aurium judicio resultans, immane quantum inter versificandum morae molestiaeque nobis, ac bilis in nasum idemtidem conciverit' ('the barbarous designations of both places and persons, of which the roughness and harshness are almost to be dreaded because of their very sound, clash with the critical judgement of poetic ears, and stir up in me a tremendous amount of delay, annoyance, and anger while writing verse'). The latter quotation contains a reference to Ovid's Heroides that complicates the message in an interesting way. I will discuss this intertextual effect below on the basis of another quotation referring to the same subtext.

³³ Ibid. 27, 'Barbaricis quid enim prohibet nos vocibus uti?'; cf. p. 15.

³⁴ Ibid. 16, 18, 19, 24, 26, 93.

Dousa wrote an introduction of several pages for it – in Dutch verse.³⁵ Because a strictly Ciceronian ideal of Latinity would preclude the use of unclassical vocabulary, Dousa's explicit discussion and sometimes even adoption of vernacular terms – like his preference for archaic words and spellings³⁶ – can best be interpreted as an attempt to form a poetical style that reacts against stringent forms of classicism.

The significance of vernacular words for Dousa's poetic ideals and his medievalist programme can be pinned down in a more refined manner by considering in a little more detail one of his warnings against the unpleasant sound of indigenous names. He introduces his discussion of the borders of the early county of Holland, full of native names, as follows: 'You ask how far and widely it extended? I would hardly dare to pronounce the names, which are almost to be dreaded because of their very sound' ('Formidanda ipso nomina paene sono').³⁷ What looks like hesitation at first sight, turns out to be a boastful remark when examined more closely. These verses allude to a passage from Ovid's *Heroides*, in which a number of place names connected with the city of Troy are said to cause fear: 'Ilion, Tenedos, Simois, Xanthus, and Ide: names that are almost to be dreaded because of their very sound' ('nomina sunt ipso paene timenda sono').³⁸ In a playful manner, this allusion causes the reader to become aware of the twofold meaning of the word formidanda, 'to be dreaded'. Like the toponyms referring to the famous city of Troy and its surround-

³⁵ The introduction is called 'Voorreden' and can be found in Spiegel Hendrik Laurensz. (ed.), *Hollandtsche riim-kroniik* fol. (:)ij v–[(:)(:)ij] r. For Dousa's involvement in the edition of this work, see Heesakkers C.L., "Rhetorische marginalia in de metrische Annales van Janus Dousa Pater (1599)", *De zeventiende eeuw. Cultuur in de Nederlanden in interdisciplinair perspectief* 1 (1985) 37–47, at 45–46.

³⁶ The archaic words used by Dousa often stem from the lexicon of Festus, *De significatione verborum*, an important edition of which had been published by Joseph Scaliger in 1574–1575 (see, for instance, Dousa, *Annales rerum gestarum* 5, 41). In addition, Dousa favours archaic spellings such as *aquai* for *aquae* (ibid. 10) or *alid* instead of *aliud* (ibid. 42).

³⁷ Ibid. 16, 'Quam longe lateque rogas? Vix farier ausim/ Formidanda ipso nomina paene sono'.

³⁸ Ovid, *Heroides* 13.53–54, 'Ilion et Tenedos Simoisque et Xanthus et Ide/ nomina sunt ipso paene timenda sono'. The allusion was first noticed by Heesakkers C.L., "'Historia proxima poetis': la storia neolatina in versi di Janus Dousa sui conti di Olanda (1599)", in De Nichilo M. – Distaso G. – Iurilli A. (eds.), *Confini dell'Umanesimo letterario. Studi in onore di Francesco Tateo*, 3 vols. (Rome: 2003) vol. II, 747–763, at 762. A similar allusion can be detected in Dousa, *Annales rerum gestarum* 67, where a reference to the absurdness of vernacular names ('nomina ridebis' ['you will laugh at the names']) is combined with a play on Ovid, *Fasti* 1.129, which refers to the ancient appellations of the venerable god Janus.

ings, the indigenous names of places in Holland are not only offensive to the ear, but inspire awe as well. The pun thus illustrates the paradoxical combination of pride and contempt that lies at the heart of Dousa's approach to the medieval past of his country.

Furthermore, this intertextual technique shows how much Dousa is concerned with literary form. Each page of the *Annales* contains several allusions to classical poetry. Above all, as Dousa frankly points out in his preface, Ovid's *Fasti* serve as the mould of Dousa's work.³⁹ They provide the metre, the narrative patterns, and the main source of intertextual references for the *Annales*. This preference for the *Fasti* as the form for his heroic material testifies to the flexible way Dousa deals with the classical heritage. The choice for the *Fasti*, an experimental poem on the interface between epic and elegy, is clearly marked as a divergence from the standard of Latin heroic verse, that is, Vergil's *Aeneid*.⁴⁰

Although the Latinity embraced by Dousa is not the ideal exemplified by Cicero and Vergil, Dousa is far from indifferent to aesthetic considerations – contrary to what has been stated in the past. ⁴¹ Therefore, I suggest that his acceptance of medieval words and names constitutes not so much a rejection of classicist style – which would have seemed awkward in view of Dousa's disparaging remarks about the style of medieval authors – as a step towards a redefinition of Latin elegance. Instead of being a hindrance, the medieval and, what is closely connected to it, the vernacular, contribute to the formation of a self-consciously innovative poetic style.

The Greatness of Medieval History

Dousa's views on the style used by medieval chroniclers were not altogether positive. He was, however, definitely able to see through the surface of the text and pay attention to its contents. We have seen that his dismissive comments about the literary value of medieval historiography did not preclude him from appreciating the 'firm

³⁹ Dousa, Annales rerum gestarum fol. **ij v-**iij r.

⁴⁰ Some remarks about the genre play and the reception of Ovid's *Fasti* in Dousa's work can be found in Heesakkers C.L., "De Neolatijnse historiografie – Janus Dousa", *Lampas* 18 (1985) 384–401, at 397–399; id., "Historia proxima poetis" 760–761, 762.

⁴ Kampinga, *De opvattingen* 25–26, claims that Dousa was altogether unwilling to make concessions to the demands of humanist Latin style.

intellect', 'sound judgement', and 'historical reliability' displayed by its practitioners. It was perhaps thanks to his acknowledgement of these virtues that Dousa was motivated to study medieval history and historiography as meticulously as he could, as he wrote to fellow historian Lambert van der Burch, 'especially if under the tortuousness of the coarse words lurks the wealth of a well-hidden treasure'. 42

This remark points to another element of Dousa's tactics for the defence of medievalism: investigating the Middle Ages is well worth the trouble, because the events brought to light are so outstanding. Thus Dousa moves from a view of the medieval as a literary category to a more broadly defined concept that includes the history of events. The counts of Holland made a remarkable display of martial virtue, shown in 'so many battles of uncertain outcome, not only against neighbouring peoples and princes, but also against the most powerful kings of Europe and the mighty men of the Holy Roman Empire – battles announced, fought, and finally brought to an end with equal mental strength'.⁴³

In this way, the explanation of medieval man's failure to produce satisfying historiography by reason of his inclination to perform praiseworthy deeds rather than to praise the feats of other men provides Dousa with just another argument to justify his own activity. While the counts of Holland performed a number of glorious deeds large enough to fill at least ten *Iliads*, they did not produce a Homer to describe them.⁴⁴ In short, to use a metaphor repeatedly employed by Dousa himself, the medieval writers had supplied a marvellous stock of building stones; Dousa was the architect to fashion the solid building these materials deserved.⁴⁵

Patriotic Considerations

Once the greatness of medieval history has been demonstrated, only one step in Dousa's rhetoric of self-justification remains. The final

⁴² Vermaseren, "De werkzaamheid" 86, 'praesertim si [...] sub opicarum vocum stribiligine gazae aliqua abstrusioris lateat copia'.

⁴³ Dousa, *Annales rerum gestarum* fol. ** v, 'spectatum Martiae Virtutis specimen, per tot ancipitium eventorum certamina non modo contra vicinos Populos, sive Principes, sed vero adversus opulentissimos Europae Reges, ipsosque Romani Imperii potentes, pari animorum robore indicta, gesta, ac patrata denique'.

⁴⁴ Ibid. fol. ** r.

⁴⁵ The architectural metaphor can be found in ibid. fol. **ij r; Vermaseren, "De werkzaamheid" 71, 75, 86, 100.

move of Dousa's argument is the assertion that the Middle Ages are of paramount importance to the fatherland. With the introduction of this idea, Dousa enters explicitly the realm of politics and patriotism.

Dousa never tried to conceal his participation in political discourse. After all, he regarded history as a lesson in prudence and called his work 'a kind of exercise in citizenship and civil business'. ⁴⁶ For that reason, Dousa says, he has elucidated his text with political notes in the margins. ⁴⁷ But the knowledge that can be learned from the *Annales* is not only of a moral kind. The daring exploits of the counts of Holland, Dousa argues, are more than just exciting or instructive stories: they constitute the very origins of the fatherland.

But yet above all, we should come to the assistance of antiquity, which has almost been bewailed [that is, it had been so grossly neglected that knowledge about it had nearly passed away], and at the same time we should for a while direct the keenness of our mental vision towards the original inhabitants of our country, the founders of such a great dominion, from which we have arrived at this exceptionally beautiful and strong body of the state that we have today.⁴⁸

Thus the medieval history of the *Annales* provides a foundation myth of the Dutch Republic. And, like many etiologies, this myth bears a specific relation to the present: it explains or legitimizes a *status quo*. In this case, Dousa presents the early history of Holland as a historical analogue to the political situation of the day. Both the liberation of Holland from the Normans and the Republic's casting off the Spanish yoke during the Dutch Revolt are described as the defence of liberty (*libertas*) and the filing of legal claims to power (*vindiciae*).⁴⁹ The rule of the early counts of Holland is described in terms clearly reminiscent of contemporary political discourse: the defence of freedom is contrasted with the slavery imposed by oppressors; the tyrant is distinguished by

 $^{^{46}}$ Dousa, Annales rerum gestarum fol. **iiij v, 'exercitatio quaedam ad πολιτείαν ac res Civiles'.

⁴⁷ Ibid. fol. **** r.

⁴⁸ Ibid. fol. ** v, 'Sed enim conclamatae paene Antiquitati ante omnia subveniendum, simul ad Aborigines nostros, tanti Principatus Conditores, oculatae mentis acies paulisper reflectenda, unde ad hoc pulcherrimum denique ac validissimum Reipublicae corpus, quod hodie obtinemus, [...] perventum'. Cf. p. 26, 'Hollandi conditor Imperii'; 68, 'tantae/ Hollandam gentem condere molis erat' (with an allusion to Vergil, *Aeneid* 1.33, 'tantae molis erat Romanam condere gentem'). Because of the patriotic tendencies in Dousa's poetic programme, Heesakkers calls the poem a 'national epic': for instance, Heesakkers, "Historia proxima poetis" 761, 762.

⁴⁹ For the Dutch Revolt, see Dousa, *Annales rerum gestarum* fol. ** r, [*****] r; for these terms in connection with the early counts of Holland, see ibid. 8–9.

his abuse of power and repression, while the good ruler shields his subjects from injustice and violence.⁵⁰

Indeed, the immediate reception of Dousa's historiography shows that his writings had the strong appeal to the authorities one would expect. After the publication of the prose counterpart to the metrical Annales in 1601, Dousa was rewarded by the States of Holland with a golden chain and a medal worth six hundred pounds. In addition, he was granted exemption from the obligation to appear in the Supreme Court, of which he was a member.⁵¹ Apparently, Dousa's medievalist programme had achieved its aims.

Conclusion

With this observation I would like to conclude my discussion of the relation between Dousa's conceptualization of the Middle Ages and the defence of his innovative historiographical programme. I hope to have demonstrated that - curiously enough - the unfavourable humanist commonplaces about medieval darkness and ignorance did not prevent historical investigation into this period. On the contrary, Dousa's work shows how they could be incorporated into a rhetoric of self-justification. Dousa uses the bad reputation of medieval historiography to point out the novelty and necessity of his work; he boldly disregards the classicist dislike of vernacular words, which cannot be avoided in writing medieval history, in order to integrate them into his unconventional poetic style; he contrasts the scorned writings of medieval society with its impressive feats of arms in order to demonstrate the importance of his subject for the glory of his fatherland. Even though the sixteenth-century res publica litterarum with its hostile attitude towards the Middle Ages did not offer optimal conditions for medievalist practices, Dousa's clever use of commonplaces thus helped him to present his scholarly programme as invaluable, if not downright groundbreaking.

Ibid. 4–9, 14–15, 22, 26.
 Vermaseren, "De werkzaamheid" 65–66.

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REPRODUCING THE MIDDLE AGES: ABBÉ JEAN JOSEPH RIVE (1730–1791) AND THE STUDY OF MANUSCRIPT ILLUMINATION AT THE TURN OF THE EARLY MODERN PERIOD*

Andrea Worm

It was only by the very end of the early modern period that illuminated manuscripts from the Middle Ages were, if only gradually, looked upon as art and as a genre of painting in its own right. The French librarian and scholar Abbé Jean Joseph Rive (1730–1791) [Fig. 1] played an important, though often neglected role in that process: he was first in making an attempt to write a history of book illumination, and to come up with a catalogue of questions to classify manuscripts. His work, although of no wide currency, had a considerable impact on other scholars concerned with medieval art and book

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¹ Munby A.N.L., Connoisseurs and Medieval Miniatures 1750–1850 (Oxford: 1972); Nordenfalk C., Color of the Middle Ages: A Survey of Book Illumination Based on Color Facsimiles, Cat. Art Gallery Pittsburgh (Pittsburgh: 1976) 7–28; Cock-Indestege E. – Lemaire C. (eds.), Handschriften en oude drukken in facsimile 1600 tot 1984, Cat. Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale (Brussels: 1984); Klamt J.C., "Zur Reproduktionsgeschichte mittelalterlicher Schriftformen und Miniaturen in der Neuzeit, Teil 1: Das 17. und 18. Jahrhundert", Quaerendo 29, 3 (1999) 169-207; Id., "Zur Reproduktionsgeschichte mittelalterlicher Schriftformen und Miniaturen in der Neuzeit, Teil II: Das 19. Jahrhundert", Quaerendo 29, 4 (1999) 247–274; Hindman S. - Camille M. - Rowe N. (eds.), Manuscript Illumination in the Modern Age, Cat. Mary and Leigh Block Museum, Evanston (Evanston, Illinois: 2001); Watson W., Illumination and Illuminated Manuscripts in the Nineteenth Century: A Survey of Responses in England, France and Germany to the Revival of a Medieval Art Form, unpublished typescript, London, National Art Library, Victoria and Albert Museum (London: 2003); Worm A., "Mittelalterliche Buchmalerei im Spiegel neuzeitlicher Publikationen", in Carqué B. – Mondini D. – Noel M. (eds.), Visualisierung und Imagination. Mittelalterliche Artefakte in bildlichen Darstellungen der Neuzeit und Moderne, Göttinger Gespräche zur Geschichtswissenschaft 25 (Göttingen: 2006) 151-212; Worm A., "The Study of Medieval Illuminated Manuscripts in German Scholarship ca. 1750-1850", in Jordan A. – Marquart J. (eds.), Anthology on Medieval Art and Architecture after the Middle Ages (Cambridge, Mass.: 2009), 246-273.

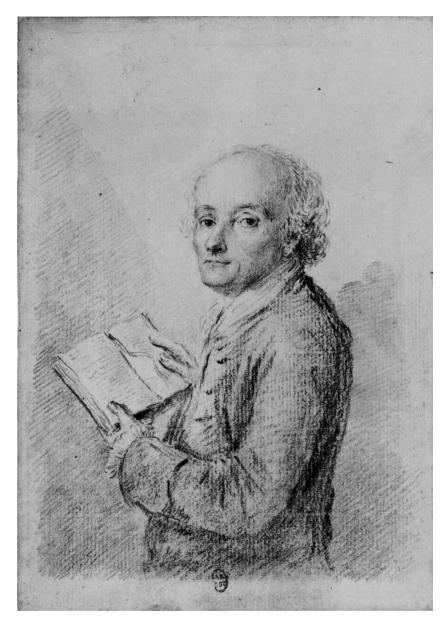


Fig. 1. Jean Joseph Rive. Anonymous drawing, c. 1775/80. Paris, Cabinet des Estampes.

illumination, in particular on two of his contemporaries, the English antiquarian and palaeographer Thomas Astle (1735–1803) and the French scholar Jean-Baptiste Louis-George Seroux d'Agincourt (1730–1814).

There is very little doubt that Abbé Jean Joseph Rive was a disagreeable and quarrelsome character. His publications are characterised by a pedantic, self-righteous, and aggressive tone, also by a slightly awkward use of grammar and sometimes rather crude neologisms. Nonetheless, even Rive's many enemies would have agreed that he was a man with a great expertise on illuminated manuscripts, and an astonishing knowledge of incunabula and books in general. For almost twelve years he acted as the librarian for the duc de la Vallière, who owned the largest private book collection in eighteenth-century France. During his time in the duke's service, Rive wrote several articles, primarily on manuscripts and printed books, but also on ancient Roman mural painting and an important essay on the history of playing cards.²

The work that is of interest in this context is a small treatise he published in 1782, announcing a more comprehensive study on manuscript illumination: *Prospectus pour un Essai sur l'art de vérifiér l'âge des miniatures, peintes dans les manuscrits depuis le IVe jusqu'au XVIe siècle inclusivement.*³

Some Notes on the Life and Work of the Abbé Rive

The only extant portrait, an anonymous drawing kept at the Cabinet des Estampes in Paris, shows the Abbé Rive as a middle-aged man with balding forehead, dressed in a simple jacket, that leaves the quilled sleeves of his shirt visible, and a scarf around his neck. In his hands he is holding an open book, looking austerely and attentively at the viewer [Fig. 1].

What is known about the Abbé Rive's life is largely derived from the autobiographical information in his own work, from accounts in early

² See for a comprehensive bibliography: Morénas Joseph-Elzéar, *Notice des ouvrages imprimés et manuscrits de l'Abbé Rive* (Paris, Claude Pierre Gueffier: [s.d.] 1795).

³ Rive Jean Joseph, Prospectus d'un ouvrage proposé par souscription par M. l'Abbé Rive: Éssai sur l'art de vérifier l'âge des miniatures peintes dans les manuscrits depuis le XIV jusqu'au XVII siecle inclusivement, de comparer leurs différent styles & degrés de beauté, & de déterminer une partie de la valeur des manuscrits qu'elles enrichissent (Paris, Pierre Didot l'aîné: 1782).

biographical and bibliographical reference books, and from a corpus of his letters, preserved in the Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal in Paris, most of which are addressed to his lifelong friend, the bookseller Joseph David in Apt.⁴

Jean Joseph Rive was born on 19 May 1730, the son of a goldsmith in the village of Apt near Vaucluse in Provence. He was ordained young, and taught physics and philosophy at the Séminaire de St. Charles in Avignon for some years, before he became a priest in the small parish of Mollèges near Saint-Rémy in the diocese of Arles. Apparently this position did not satisfy his intellectual ambitions, and it seems that there were also difficulties with his superiors. In 1767, at the age of 36, Rive left Mollèges and set off for Paris. About a year later, in December 1768: he was appointed as a librarian by Louis César de la Baume le Blanc (1708–1780), duc de la Vallière,⁵ as he enthusiastically reports to his friend Joseph David in a letter dated 22 December 1768: 'Me violà, cher ami, à la tête de la bibliothèque la plus curieuse de l'Europe'.6 For the next twelve years Rive acted as the duke's librarian, and played a crucial role in the formation of one of Europe's most famous collections of manuscripts and printed books. As a book collector, the duc de la Vallière was extraordinary. The fame of his library was only rivalled by the library of the king of France himself; it encompassed about 60.000 volumes. On various occasions, the duc de la Vallière acquired whole libraries en bloc and then re-sold the duplicates and unwanted items. The year 1768, when he employed Jean Joseph Rive, marks a turning point in the history of his library: Gustav Bogeng in his survey of great libraries and bibliophiles praised the Abbé Rive as the true creator of the collection,

⁴ Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, Ms. 6392 (years 1765–1775) and Ms. 6394 (years 1776–1784); Peignot G., *Dictionnaire raisonné de bibliologie*, vol. III (Paris: 1804) 277–285; Barjavel C.F.H., *Dictionnaire Historique*, *Bibliographique*, *de Vaucluse*, vol. II (Carpentras: 1841) 332–341; Martin H., "L'odyssée d'un bibliognoste (Lettres inedités de l'Abbé Rive)", *Bulletin du bibliophile et du bibliothécaire* (1892) 338–364; Reboul R., "Le dogue de la Vallière", *Bulletin du bibliophile et du bibliothécaire* (1889) 309–331.

⁵ Bogeng G.A.E., Die grossen Bibliophilen. Geschichte der Büchersammler und ihrer Sammlungen (Leipzig: 1922) I, 133–136, II, fig. 82, II, 55–57; Coq D., "Le paragon du bibliophile français: le duc de la Vallière et sa collection", in Jolly C. (ed.), Histoire des bibliothèques françaises. Les bibliothèques de l'Ancien Régime (Paris: 1988) 317–331; Moureau F., "L'abbé Rive ou l'homme bibliothèque: une 'physiologie' provençale", in Dauphine J. – Mestre M. (eds.), La Bibliothèque 1 [Babel. Revue de littérature française, generale et comparée VI] (Toulon: 2002) 105–125.

⁶ Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, Ms. 6392.

a view that has been confirmed by the more recent study on the duc de la Vallière's library by Dominique Coq.⁷ Without any doubt, the Abbé Rive's ambition and learnedness made him an outstanding figure among eighteenth-century librarians.

The expertise of the Abbé Rive is testified to by his publications and scholarly correspondence. They reveal a knowledgeable man with wide-ranging interests. In his publications, however, as in personal discourse, the Abbé Rive was not only pedantic, but also argumentative, constantly picking fights with other scholars, librarians and booksellers – he certainly did nothing to endear himself to the scholarly world of the capital. In his arrogance, he also tended to overestimate his own capacities as a scholar as well as the importance of the role he played for his patron. It is characteristic that he viewed himself as the duke's collaborator, whereas for the duke he was hardly more than a domestic.8 When the duc de la Vallière died in 1780, Rive's life all of a sudden completely disintegrated. The duchess de Châtillon, the only daughter and heiress of the duc, decided to sell her father's library. Rive lost his position and was not even granted a pension, but was left with a relatively moderate compensation of 6000 livres. To make things even worse, it was not him but his arch-enemies, the two Parisian booksellers Guillaume de Bure and his young collaborator Bernard van Praet who were commissioned to write the sales catalogue for the collection Rive had formed.⁹ When it was auctioned in 1783 and 1784, collectors from all over Europe made their way to France to be present at what was probably one of the most prominent book sales of all time. Rive, however, was greatly embittered that he had been neglected. In 1786, he had a first stroke, but recovered from it, and in the same year, he was finally offered a position in Aix-en-Provence. The Marquis de Méjanes (1729-1786) had bequeathed his books to the city on the condition that a new library would be erected to make his collection

⁷ Bogeng, Die grossen Bibliophilen I, 135; Coq, "Le paragon du bibliophile" 325–326.

⁸ Ibid. 325.

⁹ Debure Guillaume, Catalogue des livres de la bibliothèque de feu M. le duc de la Vallière. Première partie contenant les manuscrits, les premiers editions, les livres imprimés sur vellin et sur grand papier, les livres rares et precieux par leur belle conservation, les livres d'estampes, etc. dont la vente se fera dans les premiers jours du mois de decembre 1783 par Guillaume de Bure, 3 vols. (Paris, Guillaume Debure fils aîné: 1783); Nyon Jean-Luc, Catalogue de livres de la bibliothèque de feu M. le duc de la Vallière, seconde partie disposée par Jean-Luc Nyon l'aîné, contenant une très grande quantité de livres, anciens et modernes, nationaux et étrangers, imprimés en differentes langues, dont la réunion formé des collections presque complètes dans tous les genres, 6 vols. (Paris, Jean-Luc Nyon: 1784).

publicly accessible, but in Aix, the First and Second Estate refused to contribute to the financing of the building. Thus, Rive was faced with another disappointment, and found himself engaging in a frustrating and unsuccessful struggle with the administration of Provence. Finally, all the hatred he had accumulated over the years resulted in his most extensive publication, *La chasse aux bibliographes et antiquaires maladvises*, crudely written, full of rage and self-pity.¹⁰

When in 1789 the French Revolution broke out, Rive wholeheart-edly embraced its ideas. He joined the Jacobites, and published a series of pamphlets. In 1790, he used the political situation to take personal revenge, and was involved in the hanging of an advocate, accused of being a Royalist. In the aftermath of this event, Rive had to leave Aix, and went to Marseille, where about a year later, he died of apoplexy on 20 October 1791.¹¹

Before his death, Rive published a detailed inventory of his writings, manuscripts and notes. ¹² While his personal book collection entered the public library in Marseille, his papers and notes passed into the hands of his nephew, the orientalist Joseph-Elzéar Morénas (1778–1830). ¹³ It has gone unnoticed that a considerable portion of Rive's unpublished

^{10 [}Rive Jean Joseph], La chasse aux bibliographes et antiquaires mal advisés, suivie de beaucoup des notes critiques sur l'histoire de l'ancienne typographie et sure diverses matières bibliologiques et bibliographiques, ainsi que de plusieurs éclaircissements sur la réformation des lettres en France, sur diverses parties de son droit public et de celui de la Provence, concernant principalement les affaires présents, c'est-à-dire la contribution commune des trois ordres aux charges publiques de l'État, concernant également la manière très-reconnaissante, très-loyale et très-juste dont son administration se conduit par rapport à la bibliothèque que le marquis de Méjanes lui a léguée, et envers son premier bibliothécaire qui, sur ses fortes instances, a bien voulu sacrifier le séjour de Paris à son désir. Par un des élèves que M. l'abbé Rive a laissés dans Paris, 2 vols. (Londres, Aphobe; actually published in Aix-en-Provence, n.p.: 1788–1789); Serrai A., "La chasse aux bibliographes'. Perizia e paranoia nell' abbé Rive", in Libri, tipografi, biblioteche. Ricerche storiche dedicate a Luigi Balsamo, Biblioteca di Bibliografia Italiana CXLVII (Florence: 1997) 463–472; for a more balanced view: Moureau, "L'abbé Rive".

¹¹ Sometimes the year of Rive's death is given as 1792 due to confusion caused by the Revolutionary calendar.

^{12 [}Rive Jean Joseph], Chronique littéraire des ouvrages imprimés et manuscrits de l'abbé Rive, des secours dans les lettres, que ce abbé a fournis à tant de littérateurs françois ou étrangers, de quelque rang & profession que ce foit, de la confiance dont divers illustres Amateurs l'ont honoré en lui remettant divers ouvrages très savants à faire imprimer avec ses corrections & ses notes, & des jugemens que divers journeaux François aussi, ou étrangers ont portés sur ses ouvrages. Éleutheropolis, de l'Imprimerie des Anti-Copet, des Anti-Jean-de-Dieu, des Anti-Pascalis, ces anti-redoutables fléaux de la regeneration Françoise, & de la vraie liberté nationale, l'an second du nouveau siécle François (Aix-en-Provence, n.p.: 1791), even though Rive is always referred to in third person, there can be no doubt about his authorship.

¹³ Morénas, Notice; cf. also Reboul R., L'abbé Rive et ses manuscrits (Paris: 1872).

work was acquired by Claude-Francois Achard (1751–1809), known as the author of historical and geographical treatises on Provence. Achard published two of the Abbé Rive's articles posthumously: one on an autograph letter by Henry IV Rive had discovered, and the other one on a manuscript of Boethius. ¹⁴ Apparently, he also made extensive use of Rive's unpublished materials for his own publication, *Cours élémentaire de bibliographie, ou la science du bibliothècaire*. ¹⁵

After having fallen into oblivion in the later nineteenth century, Rive was introduced to modern scholarship only in 1972: Alan Noel Latimer Munby in his groundbreaking publication on *Connoisseurs and Medieval Miniatures: 1750–1850* dedicated a paragraph to his work, and pointed to the influence of the *Prospectus* on English scholarship. In 2003, Sandra Hindman and Michael Camille included him in their study on the *Appreciation of Manuscript Illumination in the Eighteenth Century* and acknowledged Rive as one of the 'French and English scholars who laid the groundwork for a more comprehensive discovery of the Middle Ages'. ¹⁷

The 'Prospectus pour un Essai sur l'art de verifier l'âge des miniatures [...]':

Its Production and Distribution

Jean Joseph Rive's most influential publication was the *Prospectus pour* un Essai sur l'art de verifier l'âge des miniatures peintes dans les manuscrits depuis le XIV^e jusqu'au XVII^e siècle inclusivement [Fig. 2], 18 printed in 1782 by

¹⁴ [Rive Jean Joseph], Dissertation sur un recueil de lettres originales, au nombre de 74, écrites de la propre main de Henry IV, Roy de France et de Navarre, a M. de Bellyevre, chancelier de France (Marseille, Joseph Achard [s.d.]: 1791); [Rive Jean Joseph], Notice d'un manuscrit de la Bibliotheque de duc de la Vallière, cité au tome second de son catalogue, sous le numero 2768, par feu l'abbé Rive. Le Roman de fortune ou les cinq livres de la Consolation de la philosophie de Boece, mis en rime par Jacobin de Poligny en Bourgogne (Marseille, Joseph Achard: [s.d.] 1791).

^{15 [}Achard J.], Cours élémentaire de bibliographie, ou la science du bibliothécaire (Marseille: 1806–1807).

¹⁶ Munby, Connoisseurs 14–19, 140.

¹⁷ Hindman S. – Camille M., "Curiosities: Appreciation of Manuscript Illumination in the Eighteenth Century", in id., *Manuscript Illumination in the Modern Age* 5–45, on Rive 13–16.

¹⁸ Le Gothique retrouvé avant Viollet-le-Duc, Cat. Hôtel du Sully Paris (Paris: 1979) 104, nr. 237 (François Avril); Couderc A.-M., L'abbé Rive et l'Essai sur l'art de vérifier l'âge des miniatures, unpubl. master thesis Université de Paris, Sorbonne (Paris: 2000); Hindman – Camille – Rowe, Manuscript Illumination in the Modern Age 13–16.

PROSPECTUS D'UN OUVRAGE PROPOSÉ PAR SOUSCRIPTION PAR M. L'ABBÉ RIVE.



Fig. 2. Jean Joseph Rive, *Prospectus* [...] (Paris, Pierre Didot l'aîné: 1782), frontispiece. Augsburg, University Library, 02/III.2.8.41.

Didot l'âiné with a print-run of c. 250-300 copies. 19 Rive must have started working on his project at least by 1776, when he mentions the plates in a letter to his lifelong friend, the bookseller Joseph David.²⁰ Consisting of 72 octave pages, the *Prospectus* advertised a work for subscription that would have encompassed 26 plates reproducing miniatures from illuminated manuscripts and explanatory texts adjoined to them. These plates were delivered to the subscribers in two instalments. The commentary – which was never published – should have been adjoined to the second instalment. Each set of plates was advertised for a price of 25 louis d'or for subscribers, which was then to be raised to 40 louis d'or for non subscribers. On the contemporary book market, that would have been about the equivalent of a fifteenthcentury Book of Hours of reasonable quality. According to Rive, 80 sets of plates were planned, yet it is impossible to verify how many were actually printed, since the copies are not numbered and there is no list of subscribers. At least four luxury copies were printed on vellum: one of them subscribed by the French king (today in the Bibliothèque nationale de France in Paris), one by the King of Sweden (today in the Royal Library in Stockholm), and one by the Marquis de Paulmy (today in the Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal in Paris),²¹ another copy on vellum, sold by the English collector and bookseller James Edwards in 1791, was acquired by Lord Gainsborough (its whereabouts are unknown).²² Other prominent owners of the *Prospectus* were for example Thomas Astle, Francis Douce, James Edwards, Thomas Frognall Dibdin, Seroux d'Agincourt, Auguste de Bastard d'Estang, and Léopold Deslisle. Though tracking down the extant copies of the Prospectus, which have the plates attached to them and finding out about their provenance proved a difficult task, even this preliminary sample of prominent owners testifies to the great interest that scholars and collectors took in his work.

¹⁹ Morénas, *Notice* 9.

²⁰ Letter dated 7 August 1776; Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, Ms. 6392.

²¹ "La souscription n'étoit que de 80 exemplaires en tout, dont chacun se vendoit 25 louis. L'auteur n'a que 40 souscripteurs, dont trois sont sur velin, au prix de 1600 liv., presque toutes payées d'avance en entire. Ce qu'a discontinue cette souscription, ç'a été la venue de l'auteur en Provence. En retournant à Paris, il réduira cette souscription à 50 exemplaires, dont les dix derniers ne seront tires que sur vélin" (Rive, Chronique littéraire 9–10).

 $^{^{22}}$ Édwards James, *Bibliotheca Parisiana* (London, Mr. Laurent: 1791) lot 145; the price was considerable: 56 £ 14s, which is almost the amount paid for the famous Book of Hours of François I^{er} some years later.

The reproductions of the *Éssai* are of exceptionally high standard for their time, and very accurate, which becomes apparent from the comparison of the fourth plate [Fig. 3] with a modern photograph of the Breviary made for John of Lancaster, Duke of Bedford, one of the capital works of book illumination in Paris around 1420/30 [Fig. 4].²³ The plates are based on tracings, thus they always reproduce the miniatures in their original size. The faithfulness of his facsimiles is emphasised by Rive himself:

Comme un Recueil de cette espèce exigée la fidélité la plus scrupuleuse, je ne crains pas d'assurer au Public que ni le Graveur ni le Peintre ne se sont permis le plus léger écart de leurs modèles. Ils ont travaillé pendant trois ans entiers chez moi, & continuellement sous mes yeux. D'après mes raisons, que je n'ai pas besoin d'expliquer ici aux Amateurs des arts & aux Critiques, les Artistes dont j'ai employé les talents se sont assujettis à une exécution entièrement servile. Le Graveur a commencé par calquer sur les originaux, trait pour trait, ses planches avant de les graver. [...] Le Peintre n'a peint que d'après les manuscrits; & il a conservé à mes copies la même ressemblance, les mêmes couleurs, & les mêmes nuances qu'on trouve dans les modèles.²⁴

In the Cabinet des Estampes in Paris, some of the preparatory material for the Abbé Rive's publication is preserved. The comparison of one of the uncoloured plates [Fig. 5] with a coloured plate from the same set [Fig. 6] highlights the tracings' richness in detail as well as the attempt at truthfulness of the execution in colour. The miniature, showing the soldiers of Antiochus plundering Jerusalem, is taken from a copy of the *Livre de la Bouquechardière* by Jean de Courcy (today kept at the Bibliothèque nationale de France, Ms. fr. 20124, fol. 331r), written and illuminated in the third quarter of the fifteenth century in Rouen.²⁵

Before undertaking an analysis of the manuscripts selected by Rive for his plates, the text of the *Prospectus* and its place in eighteenth-century scholarship shall be outlined.

²³ Avril F. – Reynaud N. (eds.), *Les manuscripts à peintures en France 1440–1520*, Cat. Paris Bibliothèque nationale de France (Paris: 1993) 24, nr. 3 (François Avril).

²⁴ Rive, Prospectus 6.

²⁵ Rabel C., "Artiste et clientèle à la fin du Moyen Âge: les manuscrits profanes du Mâitre de l'Échevinage de Rouen", *Revue de l'Art* 84 (1989) 48–60; cf. Avril – Reynaud, *Les manuscripts* 171, nr. 89 (François Avril).

'l'ouvrage [...] est d'une invention nouvelle'26

Writing a History of the Illuminated Manuscript

In the first part of the *Prospectus*, Rive advertises and describes his project, explaining the production of the plates as well as their cost, and the way they were to be distributed to the subscribers. Also, he stresses the novelty of his undertaking, and the usefulness of his project:

[...] j'espère que l'exactitude de son exécution & sa très grande utilité le feront regarder comme un monument nécessaire qu'il falloit ériger à l'Histoire de la Peinture & de la Calligraphie [...] mais encore à celle de l'Architecture, de divers autres arts, des usages, des habillements ecclésiastiques, civils & militaires, des modes, des meubles, des ustensiles, & des instruments de guerre des mêmes siècles. Il aura un autre avantage; ce sera de fournir un supplément aux monuments de la Monarchie françoise par Dom Montfaucon.²⁷

In short, the three aspects Rive intended to focus on were (1) the history of the art of miniature painting, (2) the development of script, and (3) the antiquarian value of the miniatures. The descriptions for the plates are described as follows:

Les explications que je donnerai de chacune de mes planches auront pour but de mettre sous les yeux des Lecteurs tout ce qu'elles contiennent de relatif aux usages, au costume & aux arts qui dépendent de la Peinture. J'indiquerai celles qui font suite aux monuments de la Monarchie françoise, par Montfaucon. Les Notices que je publierai des manuscrits d'où mes peintures sont tirées auront deux faces: l'une exposera la manière calligraphique dont chacun d'eux est exécuté; & l'autre contiendra l'exposé des pièces qu'il renferme [...]. Ces deux descriptions seront suivies d'une balance bibliopolique qui apprendra à estimer le surplus de la valeur que des miniatures semblables à celles que j'ai fait graver communiquent en France au contenu des manuscrits qu'elles embellissent.²⁸

Thus, the explanations adjoined to the plates would have focussed on the textual content of the manuscript, its material character, and the script, but also on its decoration, the miniatures and their iconography. Rive points out that the chronological arrangement of his plates would allow the reader to follow the progress of the art of painting, but also

²⁶ Rive, Prospectus 3.

²⁷ Ibid. 15.

²⁸ Ibid. 17.



Fig. 3. [Col. Pl. VIII] *Salisbury Breviary* (Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Ms. lat. 17294, fol. 106r). From Jean Joseph Rive, *Prospectus* [...] (Paris, Pierre Didot l'aîné: 1782) pl. IV. London, British Library, Ms. 62.1.19.

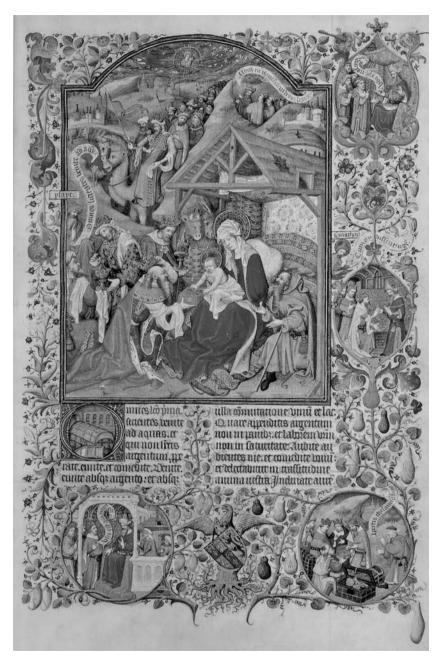


Fig. 4. [Col. Pl. IX] Adoration of the Magi. Bedford Master, *Salisbury Breviary*. Paris, c. 1420–1430. Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Ms. lat. 17294, fol. 106r.



Fig. 5. Jehan de Courcy, Livre de la Bouquechardière (Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Ms. fr. 20124, fol. 331r). From Jean Joseph Rive, Prospectus [...] (Paris, Pierre Didot l'aîné: 1782) pl. II (uncoloured). Paris, Cabinet des Estampes, Rive AA2.

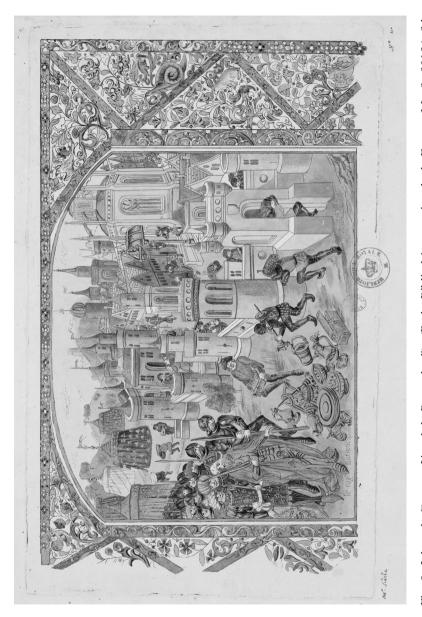


Fig. 6. Jehan de Courcy, Livre de la Bouquechardière (Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Ms. fr. 20124, fol. 331r). From Jean Joseph Rive, Prospectus [...] (Paris, Pierre Didot l'aîné: 1782) pl. II (coloured). Paris, Cabinet des Estampes, Rive AA2.

to observe the increasing awareness of the painters for the correctness of historical costume:

Par l'ordre chronologique que j'ai suivi dans ma Collection, on y verra le pinceau se perfectionner de jour en jour, & le costume, s'éclairant par le flambeau de la critique, remonter pas à pas aux temps & aux lieux des objets pour les représenter de la manière la plus conforme aux peuples & aux usages auxquels ils appartiennent.²⁹

In respect to the development of script, Rive was certainly familiar with the epochal work of his compatriot, Jean Mabillon (1632–1707), De re diplomatica³⁰ [Fig. 7], a study on the authentification and dating of charters, which became the foundation of palaeography, and the model for further publications in the field. Of far greater relevance to Rive, however, is the book by Bernard de Montfaucon, to which he explicitly and repeatedly refers. Between 1729 and 1733 Bernard de Montfaucon published in five volumes his illustrated history of the French kings, the Monumens de la monarchie françoise. 31 Montfaucon's work offers a wide range of sources, both textual and pictorial on the kings of France from Chlodwig to Louis XV, to whom the book is dedicated. On numerous plates, he assembles depictions of rulers on coins, seals, in tomb sculpture, and, not least, miniatures in medieval manuscripts, as the plate representing various artefacts depicting the rulers from Pippin to Charlemagne demonstrates [Fig. 8]. Rive not only declares that he would point out to his readers which of the manuscripts chosen for the *Éssai* also figures in the *Monumens*, he even explicitly speaks of his work as 'un supplément aux monuments de la Monarchie françoise par Dom Montfaucon'. 32

²⁹ Ibid. 13.

Mabillon Jean de, De re diplomatica. In quibus quidquid ad veterum instrumentorum antiquitatem, materiam, scripturam et stilum; quidquid ad sigilla, monogramma, subscriptiones ac notas chronologicas; quidquid inde ad antiquariam, historiam, forensemque disciplinam pertinet, explicatur et illustratur (Paris, Louis Billaine: 1681); Bruno N., "Mabillon et l'historiographie gallicane vers 1700: Erudition ecclésiastique et recherche historique au XVII^e siècle", in Hammer K. – Voss J. (eds.), Historische Forschung im 18. Jahrhundert. Organisation, Zielsetzung, Ergebnisse, Pariser historische Studien 13 (Bonn: 1976) 27–81; Bickendorf G., Die Historisierung der italienischen Kunstbetrachtung im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert (Berlin: 1998) 123–178.

³¹ Monfaucon Bernard de, Les monumens de la Monarchie françoise, qui comprennent l'Historie de France, avec les Figures des chaques Regne que l'injure des tems a epargnées (Paris, Julien-Michel Gandouin: 1729–1733); Hurel D.O. – Rogé R. (eds.), Dom Bernard de Montfaucon: actes du colloque de Carcasonne, octobre 1996, Bibliothèque Bénédictine 4 (Saint-Wandrille-Rançon: 1998); Haskell F., History and its Images: Art and the Interpretation of the Past (Yale: 1993) 133–144; Bickendorf, Historisierung 123–178.

³² Rive, *Prospectus* 15.

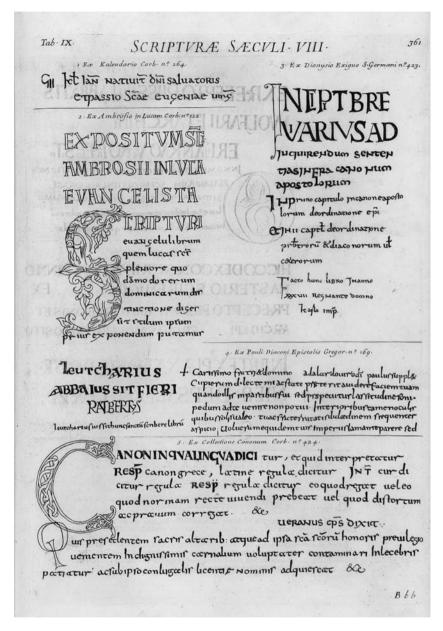


Fig. 7. Samples of eighth-century script and initials. From Jean Mabillon, *De re diplomatica* [...], 2 vols. (Paris, Louis Billaine: 1681) II, pl. IX. Augsburg, University Library, 221/ND 4620 M112-2.

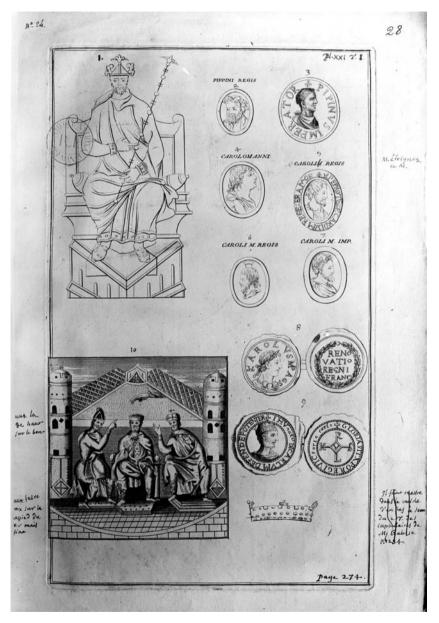


Fig. 8. Medieval Representations of Pippin and Charlemagne. From Bernard de Montfaucon, *Les monumens de la monarchie françoise* [...], 5 vols. (Paris, Julien-Michel Gandouin: 1729–1733) I, pl. XXI. Munich, Zentralinstitut für Kunstgeschichte, 4°TB 150/18 1R.

Neither Mabillon nor Montfaucon, of course, had any intention of writing a history of the illuminated manuscript as such. What makes Rive's project so interesting, and indeed so innovative, is that he focuses on the illuminated book as a medium with all the aspects that this implies. In an enormous footnote, he describes a set of questions suitable for the classification of manuscripts and their dating. In the list of questions, laid out by Rive, four main categories can be made out: text, material, script, and decoration.³³

(1) Regarding the text, Rive says: Having established the author, the circumstances of his writing and his reputation, it has to be asked whether the manuscript is an autograph or a later copy. If it is a copy, so when and where was it written? Is the text rare or widespread, was it ever printed, and if so, does the manuscript pre- or postdate the printed edition?

Il faut bien connôitre l'histoire des ouvrages d'un Auteur; savoir distinguer ceux qui sont véritablement sortis de sa plume. Un manuscrit est il anonyme ou pseudonyme? On doit en rechercher l'Auteur. L'a-t-on déterré, il faut s'instruire de sa probité, & de sa réputation litteraire? Le manuscrit qu'on a sous les yeux est-il l'autographe, n'est-il qu'une copie? S'il n'est qu'une copie, de quel siecle, de quel pays, est-elle? Sa date est-elle vraie ou fausse? [...] Son Auteur est-il célebre? Un manuscrit imprimé ou non imprimé est-il en langue vivante ou morte? S'il en langue vivante, est-il ancien? S'il est d'une date reculée, son style a-t-il été rajeuni? S'il l'a été, ce rajeunissement s'est-il fait aussi dans les autres copies manuscrites, ou seulement dans celles qui sont imprimées? Si son style n'a pas été remanié, fait-il époque dans l'Histoire critique de cette langue? S'il fait époque, quelle est sa classe? A-t-on sous la main une Bible, un livre d'Église, un Traité d'un Père de l'Église, un livre de Police ecclésiastique ou de Jurisprudence canonique? Quels sont leur siècles? Quelles en sont les leçons des passages controversés? Sont-ils châtres, interpolés, falsifiés ou par les Catholiques ou par les Hétérodoxes? Les prétentions ultramontaines les ont-elles respectés? Quelle est leur ponctuation? Quel est l'ordre des livres d'une Bible? Quelle est la division de leurs chapitres?34

(2) Furthermore, in respect to the manuscript's material character and (3) script, Rive asks: What material is the manuscript written on? What writing tools, ink, and other substances are used? What is the general character of the script? Who is the scribe? Is his name known? Do we

³³ Rive, *Prospectus* note 27.

³⁴ Ibid. note 27.

know other manuscripts executed by him? Are there corrections in the text, if so, are they contemporary or by a later hand, if by a later hand, then can we establish when they were added?

Among the other criteria listed by Rive are provenance and ownership. Was the manuscript kept in important and famous libraries? Does it bear any inscriptions, coats of arms, or any other marks of its commissioners or owners? If so, are they part of the original manuscript or later interpolations or alterations?

(4) Finally, the questions suggested by the Abbé Rive in respect to the decoration of a codex are:

Un manuscrit est-il orné de miniatures? Qui en est le Peintre, d'où est-il, en quel siècle a-t-il vécu? Ces miniatures datent-elles du temps même du manuscrit? Lui sont-elles postérieures? Quel est leur style? Quelle est leur touche? Sont-elles rehaussées d'or? Quels sont les usages, les modes, les divers autres objets qu'elles représentent? Quel costume a-t-il observé dans cette représentation? Fait-il époque, & comment? En a-t-on des preuves à administrer?

It is remarkable that Rive dedicates considerable attention to the analysis of text and script, whereas comparatively little space is given to the decoration. Though a concern with the style of the miniatures is expressed, no specific criteria are formulated to classify the formal features and to establish an adequate vocabulary to describe them. It is highly significant, however, that he asks whether the style is innovative and whether it became influential – 'Fait-il époque, & comment?' – and by which arguments and proofs this can be supported.

In the paragraph that follows Rive's presentation of his project, the history of book illumination from antiquity to the tenth century is outlined. For the Roman period, Rive assembles the evidence from sources, quoting Pliny's testimony that manuscripts with portraits of important historical figures were made on behalf of Varro (Pliny, *Naturalis Historia*, XXXV, 2). He then moves on to examples of the book illumination of late antique times, for example the illustrated calendar of 354, the two Genesis manuscripts in the Cotton Library and in Vienna, and the Vergil and Terence manuscripts in the Vatican library.³⁵ All of them were known to Rive through publications, which he discusses

³⁵ Rives, *Prospectus* 9–10; Klamt, "Reproduktionsgeschichte, Teil I"; Worm, "Mittelalterliche Buchmalerei" 157–192.

at great length in his footnotes.³⁶ Though it is beyond the scope of this article to scrutinise them in detail, one characteristic example should be singled out to illustrate the standards of reproduction in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The famous illustrated sixth-century copy of the book of Genesis in Vienna – one of the oldest preserved illustrated codices and a manuscript of great splendour – was already published comprehensively in 1690 by Daniel Nessel in the catalogue of the manuscripts in the Imperial Library at Vienna [Fig. 9, 10].³⁷ The plates are executed as uncoloured copperplate engravings. Even though they reproduce the iconography faithfully, the miniatures' stylistic features were adapted to the seventeenth-century taste, particularly in a more pronounced attempt to create a special dimension and to enhance the three-dimensional quality of the figures represented.³⁸ In other publications of the seventeenth and eighteenth century, the alterations are much more thorough; a rather extreme example is the set of copperplate reproductions of the so-called Roman Vergil manuscript, executed by Pietro Sante Bartoli in 1677.39

After the consideration of late antique book illumination, Rive declares that between the fourth and the tenth centuries, miniature painting still retained some degree of beauty, particularly in Greece: 'Depuis le V^e siècle après J. C. jusqu'au X^e, les miniatures des manuscrits conservent encore quelque beauté, & sur-tout en Grece'. Illuminated manuscripts from the period between the tenth and the mid-fourteenth century, on the other hand, are in Rive's opinion 'presque toutes affreuses, & se ressentent de la barbarie des siècles où elles ont été peintes'. ⁴⁰ This is obviously in accordance with what most of his contemporaries thought about medieval art in general, and goes back to the pioneers of art historiography, to the Italian writers of the sixteenth and seventeenth century, most prominently Giorgio Vasari and Giulio Mancini. This negative view prevailed until the nineteenth

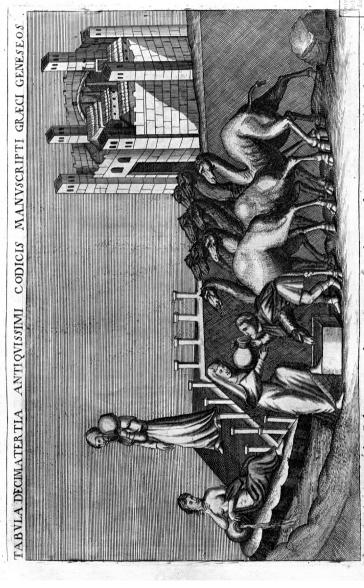
³⁶ Rive, *Prospectus* note 8–14.

³⁷ Nessel Daniel, Catalogus Sive Recensio Specialis Codicum Manuscriptorum Graecorum, nec non Linguarum Orientalium Augustissimae Bibliothecae Caesareae Vindobonensis (Vienna – Nuremberg, Leopold Voigt: 1690) III, 1–15.

³⁸ See on publications of manuscripts before the nineteenth century Klamt, "Reproduktionsgeschichte, Teil I"; Worm, "Mittelalterliche Buchmalerei" 157–192.

³⁹ Rome, Vatican Library, Vat. lat. 3867; Wright D.H., *The Roman Vergil and the Sources of Medieval Book Design* (London: 2001) 31, 69.

⁴⁰ Rive, Prospectus 11.



hami & ejus camelis; ubi in primis notatu digna est Nympha seminuda, sedens ad originem sontis, & hydriæ dextro bra-Pictura subjuncta exhibet Rebeccam progredientem è civitat. Nachor, & præbentem aquam ad bibendum servo Abrachio innitens'.

Fig. 9. Vienna Genesis. From Daniel Nessel, Catalogus Swe Recensio Specialis Codicum Manuscriptorum Graecorum [...], 7 vols. (Vienna – Nuremberg, Leopold Voigt: 1690) III, pl. 13. Augsburg, University Library, 02/I.1.2.17–3.

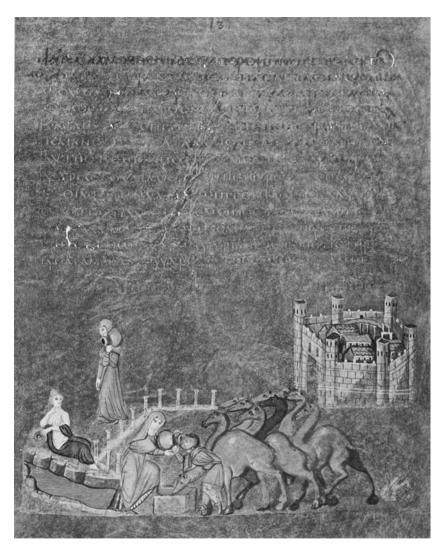


Fig. 10. [Col. pl. X] Rebecca and Eliezer at the watering place. *Vienna Genesis* (Syria, 6th c.). Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. theol. gr. 31, p. 13.

century, and certainly determined the work of Seroux d'Agincourt and others, whose ideas shall be considered below.

The resurrection of the art of painting is also the implicit theme of Rive's plates. Since the explanatory text never appeared, conclusions can be drawn only from the text of the *Prospectus* and from the choice of the reproduced miniatures. Occasionally, it has been assumed that a set of plates of unknown provenance preserved at the British Library contains a commentary by the Abbé Rive's own hand. Closer examination proves, however, that these descriptions are extremely unlikely to be his. Their handwriting bears no resemblance to that of the Abbé Rive which is well documented in the previously mentioned corpus of letters in the Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal in Paris. Moreover, they are based almost verbatim on the sales catalogue of the de la Vallière collection by Guillaume de Bure and van Praet.

'choisies dans différents manuscrits exécutés avec la plus grande magnificence en Europe' The Manuscripts Chosen for the Plates

The most straightforward reason for the selection of manuscripts for Rive's plates is that they were all in the library of the duc de la Vallière prior to its dissolution in 1783 and 1784. Another obvious characteristic is the outstanding artistic quality of the chosen manuscripts. It becomes clear from the text of the *Prospectus* that he is concerned with the history of palaeography ('diplomatique') and painting as well as with the antiquarian value of the miniatures.

Apart from two exceptions, all manuscripts selected by Rive were written and illuminated in France or Flanders, all of them dating from the fifteenth to the seventeenth centuries. The earliest manuscript being the Book of Hours of Rohan [Fig. 11], which, according to modern scholarship, was illuminated c. 1420/30, but dated to the fourteenth century by the Abbé Rive. Furthermore, the long list of fifteenth-century French manuscripts encompasses the chronicle of Jehan de Courcy (pl. II) [Fig. 5, 6], a French translation of Boccaccio

⁴¹ London, British Library, Ms. Add. 15501. It was Janet Backhouse who first pointed to this set of plates: Backhouse J., "Two Books of Hours of Francis I", *British Museum Quarterly* 31 (1966–1967) 90–96, esp. 92 note 10; Hindman – Camille – Rowe, *Manuscript Illumination in the Modern Age* 14–16.

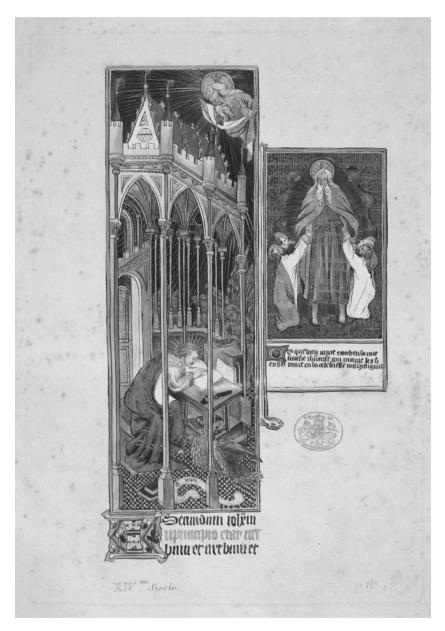


Fig. 11. [Col. Pl. XI] *Rohan Book of Hours* (Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Ms. lat. 9471, fol. 19r). From Jean Joseph Rive, *Prospectus* [...] (Paris, Pierre Didot l'aîné: 1782) pl. I. London, British Library, Ms. 62.1.19.

(pl. III), the Breviary of John of Lancaster, Duke of Salisbury (pl. IV, V) [Fig. 3, 4], the *Dialogues* by Pièrre Salmon (pl. VI) [Fig. 12], the Histoire of Gérart de Nevers (pl. VII), a manuscript of the Cuer d'Amour espris of René d'Anjou (pl. VIII), the Forteresse de la Foi (pl. IX-XIII) [Fig. 13], a manuscript of the Quinte-Curce (pl. XIV, XV) [Fig. 14], Les Commentaires de César (pl. XVI), a French copy of Ludolph of Saxony's Vita Christi (pl. XVII) [Fig. 15], the Breviary of René II of Lorraine (pl. XVIII), the Recueil des Histoires Troyennes by Raoul Lefèvre (pl. XIX, XX), the Saluce Hours (pl. XXI), the chronicle by Enguerrand de Monstrelet (pl. XXII) [Fig. 16], and a French copy of Petrarch's Triumphs from around 1520 (pl. XXIII).⁴² The two following plates are taken from Italian sixteenth-century manuscripts, a northern Italian Book of Hours, datable to 1524 (pl. XXIV) [Fig. 17], and a Book of Hours made in Rome in 1549 (pl. XXV). 43 The final plate showing St. Nicholas (pl. XXVI) [Fig. 18] is taken from a French manuscript. The miniature is on one of several leafs which were added to the Book of Hours of François Ier (1515–1547) in the seventeenth century in the workshop of the famous calligrapher Nicolas Jarry (1620–1674). Possibly the finished book was intended as a gift for the young Louis XIV, who was crowned in 1643.44

Surveying the selection of miniatures for the plates, Rive's intentions become obvious. There is a strong emphasis on manuscripts that are of interest for French history, which explains the inclusion of chronicles, but also the prominence given to author portraits and dedication images that involve important figures in French history. A case in point is the manuscript with the dialogues of Pierre Salmon, which were presented to Charles VI in 1409 [Fig. 12] and the *Quinte-Curce*. The Latin life of Alexander the Great by Quintus Curtius Rufus was translated by Vasque de Lucene in 1468 on behalf of Charles the Bold

⁴² Geneva, Coll. Bodmer, 174, fol. 230r; Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France (BNF), Ms. lat. 17294, fol. 106r, 518r; Ms. fr. 23279, fol. 53r; Ms. fr. 24378, fol. 1r; Ms. fr. 24399, fol. 76r; Ms. fr. 20067, fol. 1r, 77r, Ms. fr. 20068, fol. 125r; Ms. fr. 20069, fol. 272r, 317r; Ms. fr. 22547, fol. 1r, 112r; Oxford, Bodleian Library, Ms. Douce 208, fol. 4r; Paris, BNF, Ms. fr. 20096, fol. 4r; Paris, Petit Palais, Ms. Dutuit 42, fol. 20r; Paris, BNF, Ms. fr. 22552, fol. 12r, 22r; London, British Library, Ms. Add. 27697, fol. 194r; Paris, BNF, Ms. fr. 20360, fol. 145r; Ms. fr. 22541, fol. 77v. For a comprehensive treatment of the manuscripts see my forthcoming article (cf. the text preceding note 1).

⁴³ San Marino, Huntington Library, HM 1102, fol. 47v.

⁴⁴ London, British Library, Ms. Add. 18853, fol. 5v; Backhouse, "Two Books of Hours" 90–96, esp. 92 note 10.



Fig. 12. Pierre Salmon, *Dialogues* (Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Ms. fr. 23279, fol. 53r). From Jean Joseph Rive, *Prospectus* [...] (Paris, Pierre Didot l'aîné: 1782) pl. VI. London, British Library, Ms. 62.1.19.



Fig. 13. Alonso de Espina, *Forteresse de la Foi* (Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Ms. fr. 20067, fol. 77r). From Jean Joseph Rive, *Prospectus* [...] (Paris, Pierre Didot l'aîné: 1782) pl. X. London, British Library, Ms. 62.1.19.



Fig. 14. [Col. Pl. XII] *Quinte-Curce*. Quintus Curtius's *Historiae Alexandri Magni*, French translation by Vasque de Lucène (Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Ms. fr. 22547, fol. 1r). From Jean Joseph Rive, *Prospectus* [...] (Paris, Pierre Didot l'aîné: 1782) pl. XIV. London, British Library, Ms 62.1.19.



Fig. 15. Ludolph of Saxony, Via Christi (Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Ms. fr. 20096, fol. 4r). From Jean Joseph Rive, Prospectus [...] (Paris, Pierre Didot Paîné: 1782) pl. XVII. London, British Library, Ms. 62.1.19.



Fig. 16. [Col. Pl. XIII] Enguerrand de Monstrelet, *Chroniques* (Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Ms. fr. 20360, fol. 145r). From Jean Joseph Rive, *Prospectus* [...] (Paris, Pierre Didot l'aîné: 1782) pl. XXII. London, British Library, Ms. 62.1.19.



Fig. 17. Italian Book of Hours from 1524 (Washington, Library of Congress, Ms. 52, fol. 53r, Death of the Virgin; fol. 104r, Peter and Paul). From Jean Joseph Rive, *Prospectus* [...] (Paris, Pierre Didot l'aîné: 1782) pl. XXIV. London, British Library, Ms. 62.1.19.



Fig. 18. Book of Hours of Francois Ier, added leaf, St. Nicholas (London, British Library, Add. Ms. 18853, fol. 5v). From Jean Joseph Rive, *Prospectus* [...] (Paris, Pierre Didot l'aîné: 1782) pl. XXVI. London, British Library, Ms. 62.1.19.

(1433–1477); Rive selected the dedication image with the author and his patron, the duke of Burgundy [Fig. 14]. If the manuscripts contain coats of arms, they figure prominently, for example in the Salisbury Breviary [Fig. 3, 4], in the *Forteresse de la Foi* [Fig. 13], in the *Quinte-Curce* [Fig. 14], in the *Commentaires de César*, and in the chronicle by Monstrelet [Fig. 16].

There is also a marked interest in ecclesiastical garments and generally speaking, the history of costume. The early sixteenth-century Forteresse de la Foi is the only manuscript represented in the Essai by five plates, which in fact reproduce all its miniatures (pl. IX-XIII) [Fig. 13]. Its text describes the defence of the fortress of faith against the forces of evil such as Jews, Saracens, heretics, Vices, and devils, and its illustrations are of great interest for its richness in antiquarian detail, because garments of all ranks of clerics, from popes, cardinals, bishops, to monks of different orders are depicted, but also costumes of women, Saracens and Jews. Several other miniatures show clerics and their vestments, such as the funeral scene in the Saluce Hours (pl. XXI), the Vita Christi (pl. XVII) [Fig. 15], the chronicle by Monstrelet, which represents the enthroned pope and his entourage (pl. XXII) [Fig. 16] and also St. Nicholas (pl. XXVI) [Fig. 18]. While there is a strong interest in ecclesiastical garments, only two scenes of warfare were selected (pl. II, XV).

What clearly distinguishes Rive's approach to the illuminated manuscript from that of Montfaucon and earlier antiquarian scholars such as François-Roger de Gaignières (1642–1715)⁴⁵ is his interest in book illumination as an artistic genre, and in the development of manuscript painting. Again, the arrangement of the plates is indicative. That he presents them in chronological (and not, for example, thematic) order, serves his antiquarian interest as well as it shows the development of the art of painting. It is revealing, however, that after twenty-three plates showing French fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century manuscripts, he chooses two Italian examples from the second quarter of

⁴⁵ Gaignières interest lay with the history of the French monarchy and the manners and costumes of the Middle Ages and Renaissance. He collected original sources and artefacts, but also had a great number of copies made on his behalf of seals, tombstones, paintings, tapestry, stained glass windows, and illuminations. His collection, presented to the King in 1711, was extensively used by Montfaucon for his publication. The 'Histoire de Gérart de Nevers' (Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Ms. fr. 24378), copied by Gaignières (Paris, Cabinet des Estampes, Oa 14, Res. 590, fol. 68), was also reproduced by Rive (pl. VII).

the sixteenth century (pl. XXIV, XXV) [Fig. 17] to then conclude with what he regarded the high point of French painting, the time of Louis XVI and the calligrapher Nicolas Jarry. 46 With this last plate [Fig. 18], Rive demonstrates how the process of recovery of the arts in France through inspiration by Italian Renaissance art came to its climax in the seventeenth century. For the understanding of book culture in France, this is of great importance, since luxury manuscripts and prayerbooks for the royalty and high nobility were illuminated in imitation of the style of Nicolas Jarry up to the end of the eighteenth century.

Another peculiarity of Rive's plates is the inclusion of decorative elements. The plates II, III, IV, V and XXI [Fig. 5, 6] give representative examples for frames and ornaments used in the second half of the fifteenth century, with tendrils and flowers, in the Salisbury Breviary [Fig. 3, 4] interwoven with scenes in medallions. Plate XVII [Fig. 15] presents an example of a typical later fifteenth-century style border with three-dimensional flowers strewn on the background on which they cast shadows. Samples of Renaissance style frames are provided by plates XVIII and XXII–XXVI [Fig. 16, 17]. Four of the plates include short samples of text (pl. I, VIII, XVIII, XXIX) [Fig. 11, 17].

The Abbé Rive and his Impact on Manuscript Scholarship

Despite its relatively low print-run, the *Prospectus* had a considerable impact on scholars concerned with the medieval manuscript. This will be illustrated with the example of Thomas Astle, Thomas Frognall Dibdin, and Seroux d'Agincourt.

In 1784, Thomas Astle (1735–1803), who acted as Keeper of Records at the Tower of London,⁴⁷ published his excellent introduction

⁴⁶ Rive dedicated an article to his masterpiece, 'La Guirlande de Julie', finished in 1641, and one of the chef-d'œuvres in the collection of the duc de la Vallière (now Paris, Bibliothéque nationale de France, Ms. nouv. acq. fr. 19735), Rive Jean Joseph, Notices historiques et critiques de deux manuscrits unique et très prècieux de la bibliothèques de M. le duc de la Vallière, dont l'un a pour titre: 'La Guirlande de Julie' & l'autre 'Recueil de fleurs et d'insectes' peintes par Daniel Rabel en 1624 (Paris, Pierre Didot l'âiné: 1779).

⁴⁷ Astle was almost certainly among the subscribers. The preparatory material for his own publication preserved in the British Library, Ms. Stowe 1061, contains a set of Rive's plates, bound with other facsimile copies and script samples, as well as some single leafs and cuttings from medieval manuscripts.

into the art of writing, which became immensely popular and lived through several editions until the nineteenth century. *The Origin and Progress of Writing*⁴⁸ provides an overview of the history of script from hieroglyphs to printing, including Greek script, but also secret writing and Chinese. Astle's major concern, however, is the development of script and writing in England, particularly of Anglo-Saxon writing. In his methodology and in the way he reproduces samples from script [Fig. 19], Astle follows the example of Mabillon's *De re diplomatica* [Fig. 7]. For his short chapter on the decoration of manuscripts, he drew heavily on the Abbé Rive's ideas, which has already been noticed by Munby.⁴⁹ Astle repeats Rive's short history of manuscript illumination from antiquity up to the tenth century, augmenting it by some Anglo-Saxon examples. Then he states in what is an almost verbatim quote from the *Prospectus*, that

[...] from the fifth to the tenth century, the miniature paintings which we meet within Greek Mss. are generally very good, as are some which we find among those in Italy, England and France. From the tenth to the middle of the fourteenth century, they are commonly very bad, and may be considered as so many monuments of the barbarity of those ages; towards the latter end of the fourteenth, the paintings in manuscripts were much improved; and in the two succeeding centuries, many excellent performances were produced especially after the happy period of the restoration of the arts, when great attention was paid to the works of the ancients, and the study of antiquity became fashionable.⁵⁰

This negative outlook on manuscript illumination of the High Middle Ages that characterises Rive's and Astle's publications was challenged soon afterwards by the English bibliophile Thomas Frognal Dibdin (1776–1844). Dibdin, though notorious for his often not quite accurate statements and his sometimes slightly crude approach is not only a charming and colourful figure in English manuscript scholarship. He also must be given due credit for having been one of the first to draw attention to the aesthetic qualities of high medieval miniatures. In his splendidly illustrated *Bibliographical Decameron*, which appeared in three volumes in 1817, he comments on the 'scurrilous, saucy, but not

⁴⁸ Astle Thomas, On the Origin and Progress of Writing as well Hieroglyphic as Elementary, Illustrated by Engravings taken from Marbles, Manuscripts and Charters, Ancient and Modern, also, Some Account of the Origin and Progress of Printing (London, Thomas Payne: 1784), further editions in 1803, 1853 and 1876.

⁴⁹ Munby, Connoisseurs 14.

⁵⁰ Astle, Origin and Progress of Writing 195; cf. Rive, Prospectus 12 (quote above).

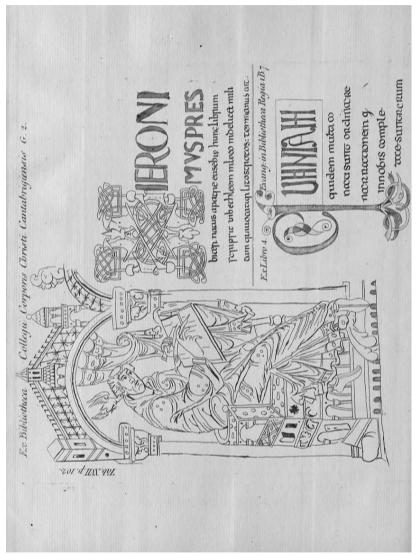


Fig. 19. [Col. Pl. XIV] Samples of English script and book illumination. From Thomas Astle, On the Origin and Progress of Writing [...] (London, Thomas Payne: 1784) pl. XVII. Possession of the author.

unsagious' Abbé Rive, and criticises him harshly for his disregard of medieval illumination.⁵¹ From his own book, Dibdin says, the readers would learn a very different lesson. He also dismissed the execution of Rive's plates, expressing his regret to have acquired them.⁵² Some years later, Sir Frederick Madden, Keeper of Manuscripts at the British Museum between 1837 and 1866, also stated that they 'were so wretchedly and faithlessly executed, that no regret can be felt at the discontinuance of the Abbé's design'. This comment is taken from Madden's introductory chapter to Henry Shaw's book on Illuminated Ornaments Selected from Manuscripts and Early Printed Books, published in 1833.⁵³ Though both authors felt that Rive's plates were not up to their own standard, it is important to note that in his short bibliographical survey, Madden writes that only two works on the matter of illuminated manuscripts 'deserve particular notice', namely Dibdin's Bibliographical Decameron and Seroux's Histoire de l'art par les monumens; as Madden points out: the Abbé Rive's Prospects predates both of them.⁵⁴

In contrast to Rive's plates, Shaw's reproductions do not focus on the miniatures, but on initials and ornaments, which are isolated from their context as in a model book. The emphasis on the decorative character of medieval manuscripts in Shaw's book, but also the high print-run and relatively moderate price were conductive to the popularization of medieval calligraphy and book illumination in England.

The name of the scholar that comes to mind first when thinking about writing a history of medieval art is, of course, Jean-Baptiste Louis-George Seroux d'Agincourt (1730–1814). ⁵⁵ About a generation younger than the Abbé Rive, Seroux d'Agincourt published the most comprehensive and most extensively illustrated survey on the history of art in his time, focussing on the period between the fourth and the sixteenth

⁵¹ Dibdin T.F., The Bibliographical Decameron or, Ten Days of Pleasant Discourse upon Illuminated Manuscripts and Subjects Connected with Early Engraving: Typography and Bibliography (London: 1817).

⁵² Ibid. I. 22.

⁵³ Shaw H., Illuminated Ornaments Selected from Manusripts and Early Printed Books from the Sixth to the Seventeenth Centuries, with Introduction and Description by Sir Frederic Madden (London: 1833) 1.

⁵⁴ Ibid. 1.

⁵⁵ Mariani Miarelli I.M., Seroux d'Agincourt e l'Histoire de l'art par les monuments. Riscoperta del medioevo, dibatto storiografico e riproduzione artistica tra fine XVIII e inizio XIX secolo (Rome: 2005); Mondini D., Mittelalter im Bild. Seroux d'Agincourt und die Kunsthistoriographie um 1800 (Zurich: 2005).

century: the six volumes of his *Histoire de l'art par les monuments depuis sa décadence au IVe jusqu'à son renouvellement au XVIe siècle* were printed in Paris between 1814 and 1823, most of them after Seroux's death in 1814.⁵⁶ This monumental work offers on 325 plates an enormous and until then unparalleled number of figures. According to the title, the works of art are used to exemplify the history of art after its decline in the fourth century until its slow rise in fourteenth-century Italy, up to its full recovery in the Renaissance of the sixteenth century. Despite his rather negative outlook Seroux was first in writing a comprehensive history of medieval art.

A lengthy chapter at the beginning of the second volume of his monumental work is dedicated to the art of illumination.⁵⁷ According to Seroux, illuminated manuscripts provide examples for the art of painting in periods from which very little wall or panel painting is preserved, and so he decides to '[...] remplir l'intervalle que laissent les autres genres de peinture à cette époque, par des miniatures puisés dans des manuscrits grecs et latins, espérant recueillir des matérieux abondans dans la bibliothèque formée'. But he also praised book illumination as 'l'art ingénieux qui donne de la couleur et du corps aux pensées'.⁵⁸

It is noteworthy that Seroux was not only almost certainly among the subscribers, he was maybe even the first scholar to know about Rive's project – five years before the *Prospectus* was published. In 1777, shortly before he set off for Italy, Seroux paid a visit to the library of the duc de la Vallière. On this occasion, he was introduced to the Abbé Rive, who presented him with his idea of writing a history of manuscript illumination and showed him the first plates.⁵⁹ Apparently, this was the first time that Seroux expressed an interest in manuscripts, and it is not unlikely that it was the Abbé Rive's project that made Seroux aware of the importance of book illumination.⁶⁰ In Italy, he was introduced more thoroughly to the medieval book by

⁵⁶ Seroux d'Agincourt J.-B.L.G., *Histoire de l'art par les monuments depuis sa décadence au IV^e jusqu'à son renouvellement au XVI^e siècle (Paris: 1814–1823).*

⁵⁷ Ibid. II, 40–85, pl. XIX–LXXVI.

⁵⁸ Ibid. II, 40.

⁵⁹ This encounter is testified in a letter by Seroux to Leon Dufourny, 9 December 1812 (Mondini, *Mittelalter im Bild* 349) and in Seroux d'Agincourt, *Histoire de l'art* II, 45.

⁶⁰ Mariani Miarelli's view on the chronology of events is misguided; the Abbé Rive certainly did not get the idea for his publication from meeting Seroux; Mariani Miarelli, *Seroux d'Agincourt e l'Histoire de l'art* 202–204, 217.

Jacopo Morelli (1745–1819), director of the Biblioteca Marciana in Venice, and also consulted manuscripts in Padua and Bologna. For his publication, Seroux used primarily manuscripts from the Vatican Library. Late antique, Greek and Carolingian codices are given most attention; the last plate shows Italian manuscripts from the fifteenth century. As a rule, Seroux does not show whole pages, but gives samples of images, ornamental decoration, but also initials, display script and script. On plate LXXIV, for instance, he arranges representative elements of Sienese book illumination of the fourteenth century [Fig. 20]. Clearly, his strategy is quite different from Rive's, on whose plates he remarks:

Sans doute le luxe de la dorure et de l'enluminure donne une idée avantageuse de la richesse du manuscrit dont elle a été tirée; mais si la dessin n'est rendu avec une exactitude parfait, et même avec une ressemblance servile, de pareilles copies sont moins propres à constituer une histoire de la Peinture relativement aux siècles auxquels elles se rapportent, qu'à donner, comme l'auteur le dit lui-même, un moyen de déterminer la valeur commercial des manuscrits ornés de miniatures.⁶²

Even though Seroux appreciates the favourable impression the plates give of the artistic quality of the miniatures, he incriminates their commercial character – incidentally, an allegation often held against modern facsimile editions. That Rive's plates were addressed to an audience of wealthy collector's interested in the material value of the manuscripts and in the splendour of facsimile copies does, however, not make them less scholarly than Seroux's dry outline engravings, which often diminish their subjects almost beyond recognition.

Conclusion

The Abbé Rive's work marks a turning point in the scholarly preoccupation with medieval manuscripts. Although his approach is still firmly rooted in the tradition of antiquarian scholarship of the seventeenth and eighteenth century, he can be regarded as a pioneer in explicitly focussing on miniatures as pieces of art, and in acknowledging the importance of book illumination for the history of painting.

⁶¹ Mondini, Mittelalter im Bild 31-31.

⁶² Seroux d'Agincourt, Histoire de l'art II, 45.

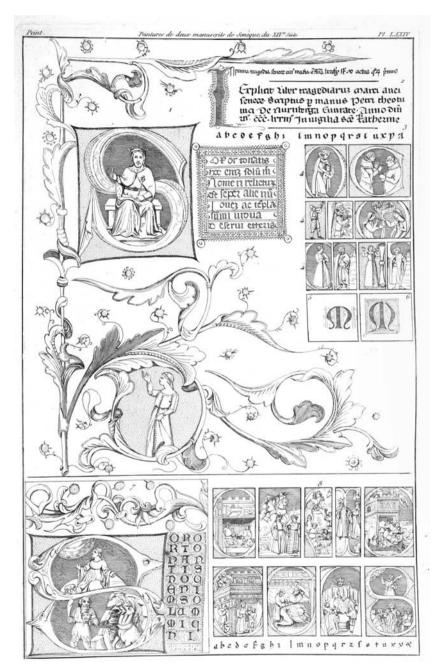


Fig. 20. Samples of Sienese book illumination. From J.-B.L.-G. Seroux d'Agincourt, *Histoire de l'art par les monuments* [...], 6 vols. (Paris: 1823) II, pl. LXXIV. Munich, Zentralinstitut für Kunstgeschichte, 2°HC 11/10 2R.

It is noteworthy that even though most of the material covered by Rive is taken from late medieval manuscripts, he does not employ the terms 'medium aevum' or 'moyen âge',⁶³ neither does he speak of 'le gothique' or 'la renaissance'. There is also no coherent concept of classification or style, and the main criterion for the progress of art is the decreasing and increasing degree of beauty.

Despite the fragmentary nature of Rive's project and the low number of copies that circulated of the *Prospectus* and its plates, it had a considerable impact on other scholars. Up to the mid-nineteenth century, the *Prospectus* remained a point of reference in publications dealing with medieval manuscripts. These references, however, become incrementally critical: on the one hand, Rive's reproductions were dismissed as either unfaithful or as unscholarly, on the other hand, his negative outlook on the High Middle Ages was now denounced as narrow-minded. By the beginning of the nineteenth century, the appraisal of the Middle Ages had changed. They were no longer seen as a period of cultural decline, and the aesthetic qualities of medieval art, particularly of script and ornamental design, were increasingly appreciated.

⁶³ Pitz E., "Mittelalter", Lexikon des Mittelalters (Stuttgart – Weimar: 1999) VI, 684–687.

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MICHELANGELO OUT OF FOCUS: MEDIEVALISM AS ABSENT LIFE IN ITALIAN RENAISSANCE ART

Joost Keizer

On November 20, 1490, the wealthy Florentine banker Piero de' Medici acquired a thirteenth-century panel that he believed to have been painted by the Florentine artist Cimabue (c. 1240-c. 1302). The panel might be identified with a painting now in the Fogg Art Museum [Fig. 1]; it is no longer attributed to the master. The acquisition was remarkable, at least according to modern concepts of the Renaissance – a period, after all, of investments in antique rather than medieval art. For Creighton Gilbert, Piero's interest represented a unique instance in the history of early modern collecting: the first, and for a long while, isolated appreciation of an Italian primitive. Yet the text that documents Piero's acquisition makes clear that his interest was not awakened by the work's 'medievalism', but by its authorship, by its being 'di mano di Cimabue'. By 1490, Cimabue was chiefly known as the founding father of the Florentine Renaissance. His art was believed to mark a first instance of rebirth rather than a late representative of a pictorial language of the Middle Ages that the fifteenth century had superseded. 'Cimabue', wrote Cristoforo Landino in 1481 in his Commento on Dante's Divina Commedia, 'rediscovered the natural forms [lineamenti naturali] and true proportion, which the Greeks called

¹ For the identification of the panel in Cambridge with the one Piero acquired, see Belosi L., "Un Cimabue per Piero de' Medici e il 'Maestro della Pietà di Pistoia'", *Prospettiva* 67 (July 1992) 49–52. I thank Todd Richardson for reading an earlier draft of this essay. Unless otherwise attributed, translations are my own.

² Gilbert C.E., *Italian Art: Sources and Documents* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: 1980) 236–237

³ The letter is published in Pagliai L., "Da un libro del monastero di S. Benedetto", *Rwista d'Arte* 2 (1905) 153: 'Piero di Lorenzo di Piero di Cosimo di Giovanni di Bicci de Medici intese che noi avamo apud nos una tavoletta dipinta di mano di Cimabue, dipinta da ogni lato: dall'uno lato era una Dispositione di Croce colle Marie e altri sancti: da l'altro lato era Christo che metteva l'una mano in sul collo a Nostra Donna, e l'altra a Giovanni vangelista. E mandò acchiederla in compera, dove don Niccholo di Lionardo Biadi priore gliela donò personalmente a dì 20 di novembre 1490'.



Fig. 1. Maestro della Pietà di Pistoia (?), Lamentation. Tempera on panel, 49.7×34.8 cm. Cambridge (MA), Fogg Art Museum.

mathematics [simetria], and the figures in the [paintings of those] superior dead painters he made alive again, and in various poses, through which he acquired much fame'. Piero de' Medici acquired a Renaissance work of art, not a medieval one.

Both Piero's and Landino's perspective on medieval painting seems to deny the stylistic shift that occurred in the two centuries that separated them from Cimabue. Rather than documenting Cimabue's art from a historicist perspective that measures temporal distance by stylistic difference, Landino's words forestall any sense of stylistic alienation and remove Cimabue from the Middle Ages. Landino employed the qualifications of 'natural forms', 'proportions' and lifelikeness to distinguish the painter from medieval painting. For Landino and many others at the time, the revival of the Greco-Roman tradition came with a restoration of art to life. Around 1400, Giovanni Villani had already made Cimabue the first painter to revive a lost antique art, in words that offered the basis for Landino's. 'By his art and genius', Villani wrote, 'Giovanni, called Cimabue, restored verisimilitude to an antiquated art, [an art] childishly deviating from verisimilitude by the ignorance of the painters, and, as it were, dissolute and wayward'.⁵

Before asking what qualified as 'medieval' for Italian Renaissance writers and artists, this essay first investigates what defined 'modern' painting for them. The first half of the essay is devoted to that investigation. I argue that the Renaissance discovered its own origins – its modernity – not so much in the Greco-Roman past but in the presence of life in the work of art. At least within the realm of painting, this model defines the re-naissance as a birth of life rather than a re-birth of culture. Life entered the image when the name and biography of its author was known, knowledge that could in turn be retrieved from the image through a reading in naturalistic terms. The life of the author, according to this model, ended up in the lifelikeness of the image. As

⁴ Landino C., *Scritti critice e teoretici*, ed. R. Cardini, 2 vols. (Rome: 1974) I, 124: 'Fu adunque el primo Ioanni fiorentino cognominato Cimabue che ritrovò e' lineamenti naturali e la vera proporzione, la quale e' Greci chiamano simetria, e le figure ne' superiori pittori morte fece vive e di vari gesti, e gran fama lasciò di sé'.

⁵ Villani G., De origine civitatis Florentiae et eiusdem famosis civibus, ed. G. Tanturli (Padua: 1997) 153: 'Primus Johannis, cui congnomento Cimabue nomen fuit, antiquatam picturam et a nature similtudine pictorum inscitia pueriliter discrepantem cepit ad nature similitudinem quasi lascivam et vagantem longius arte et ingenio revocare'. Original publication cited in Benkard E., Das literarische Porträt des Giovanni Cimabue (Munich: 1917) 42.

a consequence, I submit in the second half of the essay, Renaissance culture defined the medieval image as divorced from authorship and the traces of life. The second half focuses on Michelangelo, whose art came under attack in the years after 1500 because it purportedly foregrounded life and biography at the cost of religious subject-matter. Michelangelo countered those arguments in paintings and drawings that cancel biography through an erasure of the traces of life, an erasure that defines 'medievalism' as the figuration of death – both of the author and lifelike art.

The Renaissance Point of View

The perspective on Cimabue offered by Villani, Landino, and Piero de' Medici seriously challenges Erwin Panofsky's expectations of the Renaissance sense of the medieval past, first expressed in his seminal essay, 'The First Page of Vasari's Libro: A Study on the Gothic Style in the Judgment of the Renaissance', originally published in German in 1930.6 Panofsky took a sheet owned by Giorgio Vasari, attributed by the latter to Cimabue, as a case study in Renaissance historicism. Vasari had mounted the sheet in a new frame and had made it the inaugural page of his collection of Renaissance masters – the first page in Vasari's history of art.7 Yet Panofsky discovered the sheet not to have been by the hand of the venerated master but by a talented early fifteenth-century copyist who, fully immersing himself in a style at least a century old, produced a copy faithful enough to even mislead Vasari. For Panofsky, the copyist's interest was historical; it arose from an immediate confrontation with the visual traces of the past. Panofsky's Vasari was no less a historicist: we read that the mid sixteenthcentury frame simulates an early Trecento architecture and features a signature in Gothic script. Panofsky thought to have discovered Vasari

⁶ Panofsky E., "Das erste Blatt aus dem 'Libro' Giorgio Vasaris; eine Studie über der Beurteilung die Gotik in der italienischen Renaissance mit einem Exkursus über zwei Fassadenprojekte Domenico Beccafumis", *Stüdel-Jahrbuch* 6 (1930) 25–72. Translated as "The First Page of Giorgio Vasari's 'Libro': A Study on the Gothic Style in the Judgment of the Renaissance, with an Excursus on Two Façade Designs by Domenico Beccafumi", *Meaning in Visual Arts* (Chicago: 1982) 169–235.

⁷ For Vasari's *Libro*, see Lány J., "Der Entwurf zur Fonte Gaia in Siena", *Zeitschrift für bildende Kunst* 61 (1927–1928) 265–266.

drawing an early fourteenth-century architecture around what he held to be an early fourteenth-century drawing.

Yet, Vasari's appreciation of Cimabue does not mark an early instance of a historicist view on medieval art; the first page of Vasari's Libro was as little an instance of 'Gothic revival' as Piero de' Medici's acquisition of the Cimabue panel. Vasari's interest might be better understood as a conscious effort to relieve Cimabue from the medieval canon in spite of his style. The Renaissance point of view on Cimabue is fraught with a paradox that Panofsky's rationalization of historical perspective does not take into account. While an understanding of stylistic distance informs Vasari's drawing of the Gothicizing frame and lettering, which visually contextualize the Cimabuesque drawing within a framework that is un-Renaissance, the Vasari of the Lives still makes Cimabue the first Renaissance artist whose paintings, in words close to Landino's, are 'a little more lively and natural' than the works of his contemporaries.⁸ Perhaps Cimabue's paradoxical historical status – a well-known name responsible for a medieval kind of painting – is best illustrated by Vasari's words on the drawing in his possession, words that betray a remarkable insecurity about the sheet's stylistic prowess: 'although today they [the drawings] may seem really rude [goffe] rather than anything else, one sees how much his work profits from disegno'.9 It was a devotion to 'disegno' that distinguished the artists of the modern manner, the maniera moderna to which Vasari's Cimabue belongs, from the medieval tradition, the tradition Vasari knew as the 'Greek manner'. 10

Conflicting accounts of Cimabue's position in the history of art already inform fifteenth-century writing. While Giovanni Villani had set the standard for Landino and Vasari in his claim that Cimabue's art showed lifelikeness and that he therefore could count as the first Renaissance artist, Lorenzo Ghiberti, writing closer to Landino in time, knew Cimabue as the painter 'holding fast to the Greek manner', that is, the medieval style Landino and Vasari thought him to have

⁸ Vasari G., *Vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori et architettori, nelle red. del 1550 e 1568*, ed. R. Bettarini – P. Barocchi, 6 vols. (Florence: 1966–1987) II, 37: 'un poco più vive e naturali'.

⁹ Ibid. II, 44: 'comech'oggi forse paino anzi goffe che altrimenti, si vede quanto per sua opera acquistasse di bontà il diesgno'.

¹⁰ For Vasari's different uses of the term 'disegno', see Williams R., Art, Theory and Culture in Sixteenth-Century Italy: From Techne to Metatechne (Cambridge – New York: 1997) 29–72.

departed from.¹¹ For Ghiberti, Cimabue only deserved to be mentioned for having discovered the talent of Giotto.

Recently, Alexander Nagel and Christopher Wood also took stock of Panofsky's thesis. They argued that Renaissance artists lacked the critical apparatus to date ancient artifacts to a specific generation, or even to a specific century (sometimes millennium).¹² Medieval mosaics were dated to antique times and thirteenth-century painting to the times of the apostles.¹³ Still, something more is at stake than Vasari's disinterest, or even incapability, to date Cimabue. The *Vite* inform us of Cimabue's birth and death dates. In contrast to the examples mentioned by Nagel and Wood, which betray a consistent strategy to antedate objects to a more distant and hence more authoritative past, Cimabue gained in authority by being propelled into the future.

What motivated Vasari, and earlier Landino, to release Cimabue from the Middle Ages had nothing to do with style. Cimabue was different from his medieval contemporaries because his name was known. Dante mentions him in the *Divina Commedia*, only to make Giotto obscure Cimabue's renown. Hat least Cimabue was mentioned, and this set him apart from his fellow painters, whose anonymity Vasari would single out as a natural consequence of their painting in the medieval manner. The fact that Cimabue's name had been recorded made him modern. Vasari considered the drawing in his possession as modern simply because he *knew* that Cimabue was its author. He read style into authorship, a praxis that stands in radical opposition to current-day connoisseurship, which assigns a name to a work only *after* having judged its style. The style of Cimabue's drawing still needs a defense, whereas his inaugural status in the *Vite* does not — a book structured after all around biographies.

¹¹ Ghiberti L., *I commentarii (Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Firenze, II, I, 333)*, ed. L. Bartoli (Florence: 1998) 83.

¹² Nagel A. – Wood C.S., "Toward a New Model of Renaissance Anachronism", *The Art Bulletin* 87, 3 (2005) 403–415.

¹³ Nagel A. – Wood C.Ś., "What Counted as an 'Antiquity' in the Renaissance?", in Eisenbichler K. (ed.), *Renaissance Medievalisms* (Toronto: 2008) 53–74.

¹⁴ Dante, *Purgatorio*, XI, 94–96: 'Credette Cimabue ne la pintura/ tener lo campo, e ora ha Giotto il grido,/ sì che la fama di colui è oscura'.

¹⁵ Vasari, Vite II, 36.

Auctor/Auctoritas

In the tenth canto of Purgatory, the image seemingly surfaced as a double-faced object:

While I took pleasure in the sight of images of such humility, the lovelier to look at for their maker's sake, 'Here they come, though with slow steps', the poet murmured. 'They will take us to the next ascent'. 16

At once a manifestation of allegory, the picture was also an object of authorship. Dante was drawn to the images he saw on his way to Purgatory both for their iconography of humility and their artistry. Yet the superb qualities of the works also convinced Dante that they could have only been made by God, not by an historical author.

Glossing Dante's line almost two centuries later, Landino pushed the image over its allegorical edge, explaining that the poet had 'found delight in those images for the love of the maker, that is of the master that had made them, and for how much he signifies historically (quanto al l'historia significa): that the artistry and the authority of the artist moved him to look at them, as we see in ourselves'. Rather than attributing the pictures' style to God, Landino thought them to evidence the traces of human making. To his late fifteenth-century audience Landino needed only to mention the name of Giotto to explain what authorship means: 'So that if we are looking at a painting and we hear that it is by the hand of Giotto, the authority of that man has great weight with us'. Landino merely added in passing that the images Dante saw also amounted to an allegorical sense. 18

¹⁶ 'Mentri'io mi dilettava di guardare/ l'imagini di tante umilitadi,/ e per lo fabbro loro a veder care,/ "Ecco di qua, ma fanno i passi radi",/ Mormorava il poeta, "molte genti:/ questi ne 'nvieranno a li alti gradi". Dante, *Purgatorio*, X, 97–102.

genti:/ questi ne 'nvieranno a li alti gradi"', Dante, Purgatorio, X, 97–102.

17 For Giotto's literary reception, see Murray P., "Notes on Some Early Giotto Sources", Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes 16 (1953) 58–80; Baxandall M., Giotto and the Orators: Humanist Observers of Painting in Italy and the Discovery of Pictorial Composition, 1350–1450 (Oxford: 1971) 51–78; Falaschi E.T., "Giotto: The Literary Legend", Italian Studies 27 (1972) 1–27; and Maginnis H.B.J., "The Problem with Giotto", in id., Painting in the Age of Giotto: A Historical Re-evaluation (University Park, PE: 1997) 79–102.

¹⁸ Landino C., *Commento sopra la Commedia*, ed. P. Procaccioli, 4 vols. (Rome: 2001) III, 1209: 'Et dilectavasi di quelle imagini per amore del fabbro, cioè del maestro, che l'haveva facte, et questo quanto a l'historia significa, che l'artificio et l'auctorità

Landino's words go to the heart of the Renaissance cult of names that was also celebrated in Piero's acquisition of the Cimabue. Interest in a certain work of art was awakened by its authorship, which becomes a confirmation of authority. The Renaissance fascination with names is usually assumed – although little investigated – as one more symptom of a revival of classical antiquity. The Greek and Roman past had produced a whole range of famous artists whose names and fame were recorded in Pliny and were faithfully copied in the writings of Ghiberti, Alberti and others. Ancient sources copied by Renaissance writers assign the fame of artists to the mimetic success of their art, more often than not seducing the viewer to confuse paint with life.¹⁹ Landino's words, however, make no reference to a revered antiquity. His distinction between an allegorical and a historical viewing of the image is firmly based in the Christian tradition that distinguishes between a figural (allegorical) reading of the bible and a literal one. Landino's phrase 'quanto a l'historia significa' might in fact be rendered simply as the 'literal sense'.

The way Landino situates the author/artist in historical time and the allegorical identity of the artwork outside it developed directly out of medieval theories of textual authorship. The literary historian A.J. Minnis has shown that the conceptualization of authorship as an authoritative force within a text was developed in thirteenth-century scholastic thought from reading the bible in a literal sense. Biblical exegetes retrieved the identity of a specific, historical author by looking for traces in the text that relate and betray the author's historical conditions. Such a literal reading mined the bible and its later exegesis for descriptions of landscape, clothing and people, which provided the reader with a mirror of the author's world. The author, late medieval scholastics contended, makes him- or herself known through the life-like rendering of his or her world, through lifelike description rather than allegory.²⁰

dell'artefice lo muvea a guatarla, chome veggiamo in noi. Imperoché se guardiam la pictura, et udiamo quella essere di mano di Giotto, può molto in noi l'auctorià de l'huomo. Et allegoricamente dimostra, che guatava gl'exempli de l'humilità per amor del maestro, cioè per l'amore di Dio'.

¹⁹ Didi-Hubermann G., "L'imitation comme mythe à la renaissance', in Gaetchens T.W. (ed.), Künstlerische Austausch: Akten des XXVIII. Internationalen Kongresses für Kunstgeschichte, Berlin 15.–20. Juli 1992 (Berlin: 1993) 493–502.

²⁰ Minnis A.J., Medieval Theory of Authorship: Scholastic Literary Attitudes in the Late Middle Ages (London: 1984).

Theories of authorship from the thirteenth to the fifteenth century read instances of verisimilitude, both in text and image, as the deposit of a personal perspective, as issuing from the unique point of view of a time-bound, geographically determined persona whose words or paintings record his personal take on the world.²¹ The lifelike representation of our world becomes the truthful rendering of the author's life. It marks the birth of subjectivity.²² Even with Leonardo da Vinci we are still far removed from that ultimate dream of the mimetic tradition to produce images of nature unmediated by the painter's brush and unaffected by his persona.23 In a note close to Landino's words in time, Leonardo relates the origins of Florentine pictorial realism as art's reorientation on personal experience.²⁴ 'Born in the solitary mountains, inhabited only by goats and similar animals', Giotto's first exercises in mimetic art were drawings of the creatures that inhabited his living environment. Born in nature, Giotto's art becomes of nature. 'Nature', exclaims Leonardo, 'mistress of good authors', Maestra di boni autori.²⁵ Giotto documented biography in art.

²¹ This compares well to Erich Auerbach's writing on *mimesis* in the literary tradition. See Auerbach E., *Mimesis. Dargestellte Wirklichkeit in der abendländischen Literatur* (Bern: 1946) 169–196 and *passim*.

²² See Summers D., *The Judgment of Sense: Renaissance Naturalism and the Rise of Aesthetics* (Cambridge – New York: 1987) 111. Although Summers argued that the rise of naturalistic aesthetics in the Renaissance was intimately bound up with the Aristotelian tradition, he failed to note the theories about authorial causalities developed from Aristotle in thirteenth-century scholastic thought that, I submit, are at the basis of it.

²³ Although Leonardo's theory of *sfumato* seems to point in the direction of unmediated mimesis; see Nagel A., "Leonardo and Sfumato", *Res: Anthropology and Aesthetics* 24 (1993) 7–20.

²⁴ For the argument that Landino based his accounts of Giotto and Masaccio on Leonardo's note, see Whol H., "'Puro senza ornato': Masaccio, Cristoforo Landino and Leonardo da Vinci", *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 56 (1993) 256–260.

²⁵ Richter J.-P. (ed.), *The Literary Works of Leonardo da Vinci*, 2nd ed., 2 vols. (Oxford: 1939) I, 371–372, § 660: 'Siccome il pittore avrà la sua pittura di poca eccielenza, se quello piglia per autore l'altrui pitture, ma s'egli jnparerà dalle cose naturali farà bono frutto, some vedemo in ne' pittori dopo i Romani, i quali senpre imitarono l'uno dall'altro e di età in età senpre andava detta arte i[n] dechinazione; dopo questi venne Giotto Fiore[n]tino, il quale (no[n] è stato co[n]te[n]to allo imitare l'opere di Cimabue suo maestro) nato i[n] mo[n]ti soletari, abitati solo da capre e simil bestie, – questo, se[n]do volto dalla natura a simile arte, comi[n]ciò a disegniare sopra i sassi li atti delle capre delle quali lui era guardatore; e così comi[n]ciò a fare tutti li animali che nel paese si trovava[no] in tal modo, che questo dopo molto studio ava[n]zò no[n] che i maestri della sua età, ma tutti quelli di molti secoli passati; dopo questo l'arte ricadde percfhè tutti imitavano le fatte pitture, e così di secolo i[n] secolo a[n] dò declina[n]do i[n]sino a ta[n]to, che Tomaso fiore[n]tino, cognominato Masacio,

Leonardo's note also exemplifies the paradoxical position of Cimabue, who is only mentioned as the master Giotto was not content with imitating. In contrast, for men such as Villani, Landino and Vasari, the fact that Cimabue existed as a biographical entity could only be justified by making his images into similar documents of lived experience. His name known, Cimabue's living *in* the world was explained by considering his paintings as *of* the world. Mimesis issues from authorship, as much as the other way around.

Until the last years of the fifteenth century, the emphasis on artistic authorship in the writing on and the making of art posed little problems. Still fully in line with medieval theories of authorship, 'auctor' was simply considered as a sign of 'auctoritas'. Yet, Leonardo, now writing after the turn of the century, was well aware of the dangers for the religious efficacy of art hiding in modern painting. In 1505, once more pushing for the primacy of painting in all human endeavours, he distinguished with some enthusiasm between devotion directed towards 'the one who is figured in' the painting and devotion to the author responsible for the painting. 'If you would claim', Leonardo wrote of the practice of devotion,

that this is not due to the virtue of the painter, but to the inherent virtue of the thing imitated, it may be implied that if that were the case, the minds of men could be satisfied by staying in bed, rather than going either to tiring and dangerous places or on pilgrimages as one continually sees being done.²⁶

mostrò con opera perfetta come quelli che pigliavano per autore altro che la natura meastra dei maestri, s'afaticavano i[n]uano; così voglio dire di queste cose matematiche, che quegli che solame[n]te studiano li autori e no[n] le opere di natura, so[no] per arte nipote e no[n] figlioli d'essa natura, maestra di boni autori; O della som[m] a stoltitia di quelli i quali biasimano colore che i[n]parano dalla natvra, lascia[n]do stare li autori discepoli d'essa natura!'.

²⁶ Farago C. (ed.), Leonardo da Vinci's 'Paragone': A Critical Interpretation with a New Edition of the Text in the 'Codex Urbinas' (Leiden: 1992) 187–189, § 8: 'Le scientie che sono inimitabilli in tal modo che con quelle il discepollo si fa equale allo hauttore e similmente fa il suo frutto, queste sonno uttile allo immittatore, ma non sonno de tanta eccelentia quanto sonno quelle che non si possono lasciare per heredita come l'altre sustantie, infra le quali le pittura è la prima. [...]. Questa [arte della pittura] sola si resta nobbile, questa sola onora il suo Autore e resta pretiosa e unica e non partorisse mai figlioli equali a sè. E tal singularita la più eccellente che quelle che per tutto sono publicate. Hor non vedemo noi li grandissimi Re dell' Oriente andare velati e coperti, credendo diminuire la famma loro col publicar e divulgare le lore pressentie? Hor non si vede le pitture rapressentarici delle divine deita essere al continuo tenute coperte con copriture di grandissimi prezzi, e quando si scoprano prima si fa grande solennita ecclesiastiche, de vari canti con diverse suoni. E nello scoprire, la gran moltitudine

In words whose radicalness can hardly be overestimated, Leonardo makes early modern pilgrimage into one giant spectacle of paying homage to artistic personas, who under the new mimetic conditions of art have become no less present in the painting than the figures of Christ, the Virgin, Saints and other Christian mysteries. Leonardo is well aware that this counts for the visual arts only, and not for texts. Although the poet is also an imitator of nature, 'the letters of his words' will never be adored.²⁷ Whereas the religious *auctoritas* of a *text* was secured when its *auctor* was known by name, the religious *image* almost collapsed under the pressure of the author whose presence in the image began to overshadow the traditional, pre-Renaissance primacy of painting's subject-matter.

Aware of what authorial presence did to the religious image, the Dominican friar Girolamo Savonarola began to criticize modern painting in a sermon of 1497, preached at a packed Florence Cathedral. The sermon was an attack on the sort of painting that was epitomized by the dictum 'Every painter paints himself'. The aphorism, which is first recorded in Florence between 1472 and 1479, summarized the kind of osmotic relation between author and work that Leonardo talked about in the note on Giotto.²⁸ 'One says that every painter paints himself. He does not so much paint himself as a man', Savonarola avoids any possible confusion with the painting of one's own likeness, 'but he paints himself as a painter, that is, according to his concept', second il concetto suo. That concetto was intimately tied up with the artist's new devotion to pictorial realism. Cataloging the props of nature that define the pictorial realism of fifteenth-century Florentine

de populi che qui vi concorrono immediate si gittanno a terra quella adorando e pregando per cui tale pittura, è figurata, de l'aquisto della perduta sanita e della etterna salute, non altra mente che se tale Iddea fusse lì presente in vitta. Questo non accade in nissun'altra scientia od altra humana opera, et se tu dirai questa non esser virtù del pittore, ma propria virtu della cose immitata, si rispondera, che in questo case le mente dell homini pò sattisfare standossi nel letto, e non andare nè lochi fatticosi e pericolosi nè peligrinaggi al continuo far si vede'.

²⁷ Ibid. 233–235, § 26: 'Tu dicem o pittore, che'lla tua arte è adorata. Ma non inputtare a te tal virtù, ma alla cosa di che tal pittura è rapresentatrice. Qui 'l pittore risponde: o tu, poeta, che ti fai anchora to imitatore, perché non rappresenti tu con le tue parole cose che le lettere tue, contenitrice d'esse parolle, anchora loro sieno adorate? Ma la natura ha più favorito il pittore ch'el poeta, e meritamente l'opere del favorito debbono essere più honorate che di quello che non è in favore'.

²⁸ For Leonardo's use of the term, see Zöllner F., "'Ogni pittore dipinge sé': Leonardo da Vinci and 'automimesis'", in Winner M. (ed.), *Der Künstler über sich in seinem Werk* (Weinhem: 1992) 137–160.

art – 'lions, horses, men and women' – Savonarola adds that these 'are all according to his concept'. Because Savonarola believed artists to question the objectivity of God-created Nature, he considered them 'vain like the philosophers'.²⁹ Painted nature can never approach Nature herself because of the subjectivity of representation. In painting, the friar said, nature stands fully distorted through the artist's personal point of view.

In Florence, Savonarola's words produced what was probably the most severe artistic crisis in the history of representation between Byzantine iconoclasm and the Protestant breaking of images. Commissions for painting, sculpture and architecture dropped to unprecedented lows in a city that had once, according to a contemporary visitor, 'lived on the power of the visual'.³⁰ Works of art from stellar sculptors like Donatello and painters like Botticelli were burned at the infamous bonfires of 1497 and '98.³¹ The sixteenth century never fully recovered from that moment. It was a century pregnant with critique against the sort of painting that had allegedly put art before religion, that had privileged authorship over subject-matter — a wave of criticism that increased during the Protestant and Catholic Reformations.

It is well known that Michelangelo was often subject of that criticism. What is often not realized, however, is how precisely criticism turned on the model of authorship proposed above. Michelangelo's art provides an ideal testcase for this model.

²⁹ Savonarola G., *Prediche sopra Ezechiele*, ed. R. Ridolfi, 2 vols. (Rome: 1955) I, 343: 'E' si dice che ogni dipintore dipinge se medesimo. Non dipinge già sè in quanto uomo, perchè fa delle immagini di leoni, cavalli, uomini e donne che non sono sè, ma dipinge sè in quanto dipintore, *idest* secondo il suo concetto; e benchè siano diverse fantasie e figure de' dipintori che dipingono, *tamen* sono tutte secondo il concetto suo. Così li filosofi, perchè erano superbi, descrissono Iddio per modi altieri e gonfiati'. I have partly adjusted the English translation of this passage in Gilbert, *Italian Art* 159. For the meaning of the word 'concetto' in sixteenth-century art theory, see Summers D., *Michelangelo and the Language of Art* (Princeton: 1981) 172, 225, 228–229, 374.

in maravigliòme assay come che vi sta non vive solamente di veddere, odire e parlare senza essere subiecto ad alcun'altra passione naturale e non posso credere che chi ne facesse prova che non gli venisse ad effetto che si viverebbe solo dela virtù visiva'. Quoted in Brown B.L., "L' 'Entrata' fiorentina di Ludovico Gonzaga", Rivistà d'Arte 42 (1991) 216–217. For the drop in commissions, see Hall M.B., "Savonarola's Preaching and the Patronage of Art", in Verdon T. – Henderson J. (eds.), Christianity and the Renaissance: Image and Religious Imagination in the Quattrocento (Syracuse: 1990) 493–522.

³¹ Bredekamp H., "Renaissance Kultur als 'Hölle': Savonarolas Verbrennungen der Eitelkeiten", in Warnke M. (ed.), *Bildersturm: Die Zerstörung des Kunstwerks* (Frankfurt am Main: 1973) 41–64.

Modern Painting and Its Discontents

A reflection on the relationship between author and work informs Michelangelo's earliest artworks. In 1500, at the age of twenty-five, Michelangelo chiseled his name over the breast of the Virgin in the Roman Pietà, the only piece he would ever sign. He signed his name differently than he signed his letters. A carefully orchestrated interpunct between 'Michel' and 'Angelus' allows Michelangelo to be read as 'Michael, the Angel'. 32 In letters 'Michelagnolo' remains just that: a name that identifies the sender of the message. Painting and sculpture demanded a specific kind of authorship; it had to take into account the copula between author and work that mere letter writing did not demand. In the Pietà, Michelangelo presents his art as one of divine manufacture, produced by 'Michael the Angel', by an artist who presents himself as an envoy of God's inventions. Michelangelo insists that he did not turn to his living environment to model his Pietà on; instead he claims to have received his inventions directly from the otherworldly. When Michelangelo's contemporaries claimed his art 'divino', they understood the marriage between biography and work as Michelangelo had propagated it.

Reporting of the artist's works, they maintained the separation between 'Michael' and 'Angel', a practice that found an especially elaborate expression in 1516, in Lodovico Ariosto's phrase 'Michael, more than mortal, Angel divine', *Michel, più che mortale, Angel divino.*³³ The belief that Michelangelo's divine persona and the divinity of his art were authentic images of one another, that, in other words, Ariosto's words and Michelangelo's signature were not considered empty literary puns, surfaces with clarity in a letter the painter Rosso Fiorentino sent to Michelangelo in 1526. Earlier, Rosso had apparently doubted the divinity of Michelangelo's work on the Sistine Ceiling, but now he affirms the divine nature not only 'of that work but also of *yourself* and of every other work of yours'. He added: 'Nor do I think you'll attribute this to vile adulation, for I'm absolutely

 $^{^{32}}$ Wang A.J., "Michelangelo's Signature", Sixteenth Century Journal 35, 2 (2004) 447–473.

³³ Ariosto L., *Orlando Furioso*, ed. L. Caretti (Milan – Naples: 1954) 852 (Canto 33.2): 'Michel, più che mortale, Angel divino'. For an early instance of the artist's name being spelled 'Michel Angiolo', see Archivio di Stato, Firenze, Manoscritti, 117 (*Diario storico di quello ch'è seguito nella Città di Firenze Cominciando l'anno 1435 – a tutto il 1522*), fol. 80r (new 85r).

certain that you yourself are aware of it, since without that awareness you'd not be able to work'.³⁴

Sixteenth-century writing on Michelangelo conveys the impression that contemporaries recognized Michelangelo's artistic persona in the extreme lifelikeness, in the vivacità of his figures, just as the mimetic impulse had earlier betraved Giotto's authorship. (Indeed some writers would understand Michelangelo's art as only a natural succession to Giotto's.)³⁵ For Michelangelo's contemporaries, the suggestion of life in dead material was suggestive of the creative powers of God, who had infused life in inanimate clay in the days of Creation, an event famously represented by Michelangelo on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel. The vivacità of those Ignudi that move restlessly around Michelangelo's (re-) creation of the creation of the world might indeed be understood as nothing less than a visual testament to Michelangelo's God-like capacity to evoke life in lifeless paint, as a self-portraiture of Michelangelo's divine persona.³⁶ For Francesco Lancilotti, writing in 1509, the power not just to recreate nature but to create it from scratch justified an artist being called a 'second God and of a different nature', able to 'make a dead thing appear alive'. 37 Later, in letters sent to Michelangelo in 1537, Pietro Aretino attributed the vivacity of Michelangelo's art to a similar otherworldly origin. In a letter addressed to 'divino Michelagnolo', Aretino wrote of 'your vivid hand in which hides the idea of a new nature'. 38 And in 1544 he attested to 'the miracles of your divine

³⁴ Barocchi P. – Ristori R. (eds.), *Il Carteggio di Michelangelo*, 4 vols. (Florence: 1965–1983) III, 236: 'et non solo questo, ma che i' habbi mai altro che sì come di cosa divinamente facta parlato: et sì di quella et sì di voi et de ogn'altra opera vostra, se non di quanto merita, almeno di quanto io son capace. Né questo penso che ad vile adulatione [m]e adtribuirete, con ciò sia cosa che certissimo sono il cognoscete da per voi – ché senza non 'l posseresti operare –, perchè la pura mia intentione so cognoscerete esser questa'. Quoted in Campbell S.J., "'Fare una cosa morta parer viva': Michelangelo, Rosso and the (Un)Divinity of Art", *The Art Bulletin* 84, 4 (2002) 596.

³⁵ See, of course, Vasari, Vite IV, 4–13; VI, 3–4.

³⁶ Summers, *Michelangelo* 69, 175; and Wind E., "Michelangelo's Prophets and Sibyls", in Holmes G. (ed.), *Art and Politics in Renaissance Italy* (Oxford: 1993) 280–291.

³⁷ Lancilotti F., *Tractato di pictura (Roma 1509)*, ed. H. Miedema – P. de Meijer (Amsterdam: 1976) 14, 18: 'Et sappi che chi dir vorrà pittura,/ Per dir correcto el proprio nome, dica/ Un altro Iddio e un'altra natura'. And: 'Fare una cosa morta parer viva/ Quale iscienza è più bella che questa?/ O felice colui che quì arriva!'. See Campbell, "Michelangelo, Rosso and the (Un)Divinity of Art" 597–598.

³⁸ Barocchi – Ristori, *Carteggio* IV, 82: 'le man vostre vive occulta l'idea d'una nuova cultura'.

intellect' by referring to 'the spirits of the lively nature in the sensible colors of art'.³⁹

Michelangelo's reflections on authorship seem to have offered some creative sustenance in response to the sort of criticism ventilated by Savonarola. Although asserting the presence of the author by insisting on lifelike representation, that presence is partly canceled by relocating the true origins of the artist's *concetto* to God. Not content with representing *his* world as Giotto had done, he claimed to be translating things into paint that had heretofore remained invisible for mere mortals. Around the middle of the sixteenth century, however, Michelangelo's insistence on an alternative model for authorship came under attack. In a radical reversal of his earlier words of praise, Aretino began to criticize Michelangelo's fresco of the *Last Judgment*. Aretino's critique focused on the relationship between biography and painting. 'For how', he asked the painter in 1545,

can that Michelangelo of such stupendous fame, that Michelangelo of outstanding prudence, that Michelangelo of admirable habits, have wanted to show the people no less religious impiety than the perfection of painting? Is it possible for you, who through being divine do not condescend to the company of men, to have made this?⁴⁰

The published version of the letter, issued in 1550, is even more explicit in linking the artist's supposed divinity to the name Michelangelo. In it, Aretino first addresses him by his family name Buonarroti, only switching to 'Michelagnolo' when doubting the sincerity of his divine authorship. ⁴¹ Only from that name that had first allowed Michelangelo to present his art as angel-like could criticism start. Michelangelo's animated figures Aretino reinterprets as distracting from art's religious creed. 'Our souls', he wrote, 'rather need affection and devotion than the liveliness of design [and] may God inspire his Holiness Paul [III] like he inspired the Blessed Gregory, the one who set to remove from Rome all the prideful statues of idols, rather than hinder the good in their devotion to the humble images of saints'. ⁴² Like Leonardo's

³⁹ Ibid. 181: 'i miracoli del suo intelletto divino', 'gli spiriti de la viva natura nei sensati colori de l'arte'.

⁴⁰ Ibid. 215: 'Adunque quel Michelangelo stupendo in la fama, quel Michelangelo notabile in la prudentia, quel Michelagnolo ammiranno nei costumi ha voluta mostrare a le genti non meno impietà di irrelegione che perfettion di pittura'.

⁴¹ Aretino P., Lettere, ed. P. Procaccioli, 4 vols. (Rome: 2000) IV, 130.

⁴² Barocchi – Ristori , *Il Carteggio* IV, 217: ¹le nostre anime han piú bisogno de lo affetto de la divozione che de la vivacità del disgno, inspiri Iddio la Santità di Paolo

pilgrim, Aretino's Christian sees *vivacità* pushing away from devotion proper towards a devotion to art, which, in contrast to Leonardo, can only be uprooted by iconoclasm. The reference to Gregory the Great puts Michelangelo's art in a clear historical perspective. Comparing 'the liveliness of design' to 'the haughty statues of idols', Aretino understands Michelangelo's art as a revival of classical antiquity – of course to no one's surprise in the sixteenth century – but then pleads for a return to a state of the image that he locates between Gregorian iconoclasm and the rise of modern painting: to the un-naturalistic Middle Ages.⁴³

Aretino was not the only critic of Michelangelo's art. Criticism gathered momentum after the artist had finished the Last Judgment in 1541, a painting attacked for its aggressive modern agenda that was thought to be pushing art away from its pre-Renaissance integrity. In most critical writing, the label 'modern' became a keyword for art's failure to communicate religious content. 'Today when they are making a certain work', wrote Giovanni Andrea Gilio in the preface to his Deglio errori de' pittori circa l'historie of 1561, 'the first the modern painters [i moderni pittori] attempt to do is to twist the head, the arms or the legs of their figures, this is to say they are foreshortened, [...] and they think little about or do not attend at all to the subject [soggetto] of the representation they are making'.44 It is clear that Gilio is referring to Michelangelo's Last Judgment. No other painting at the time showed more twisting figures than the fresco adoring the altar wall of the central chapel of Christianity. Later in his text, Gilio singles out Michelangelo's Christ appearing to Saint Paul in the Pauline Chapel [Fig. 2], finished in 1545, as another clear effort to subject religious content to what he called the 'charms of art'. 45 Represented

come inspirò la Beatitudine di Gegorio, il quale volse imprima disornar Roma de le superbe statue degli idoli che torre, bontà loro, la riverentia a l'humili imagini dei santi'.

⁴³ The idea that the early forms of iconoclasm marked the end of classical art is also present in Lorenzo Ghiberti's notes on the history of art in his *Commentarii* of around 1450; see Ghiberti, *Commentarii* 83.

⁴⁴ Barocchi P., *Trattati d'arte del Cinquecento fra manierismo e controriforma*, 3 vols. (Bari: 1960–1962) II, 3–4: 'mi pare ch'oggi i moderni pittori, quando a fare hanno qualche opera, il primo loro intento è di torcere a le loro figure il capo, le braccia o le gambe, acciò si dica che sono sforzate, e quei sforzi a le volte sono tali che meglio sarebbe che non fussero, et el soggetto de l'istoria che far pensano poco o nulla attendono'.

⁴⁵ Ibid. 39: 'Io fo molto più ingenioso quello artefice che accomoda l'arte del soggetto a la verità del soggetto, che quello che ritorce la purità del soggetto a la vaghezza de l'arte'.



Fig. 2. Michelangelo Buonarroti, The Conversion of Paul, 1545. Fresco, 625 × 661 cm. Rome, Vatican Museums.

in extreme foreshortening, 'devoid of any dignity and any decorum, [Christ] seems to be falling from the sky in an undignified way'. ⁴⁶ In its stead Gilio recommends the un-naturalistic forms of pre-Renaissance painting, 'which attends more to truth and devotion than to pomp'. ⁴⁷ Unmodern art is marked by a 'certain frontality' that stands in sharp contrast to Michelangelo's modern art of foreshortening. ⁴⁸

What Gilio is referring to when he says that 'the charms of art' had divorced themselves from subject-matter is an over-emphasized distinction between the allegorical interpretation of the work of art and its literal interpretation, the way an artwork, to borrow Landino's words again, 'signifies historically' rather than allegorically. Modernity, Gilio upholds, arose at the point that artists discovered painting's own internal logic, what he called 'the force of art'. That logic was no longer premeditated on illustrating a text or visualizing a de-historicized allegorical meaning, but driven by an agenda of art that bypasses the primacy of subject-matter.⁴⁹ 'I am certain', says Gilio, 'that Michelangelo [...] didn't err because of ignorance, but rather that he has deliberately embellished the brush and pleased art rather than the truth'. 50 Art borrows its force from mimesis. Only mimesis is able to make the figures of Christ and the Saints leave the world of the painting, to depart from subject-matter within the frame and to enter our space, where history and not allegory structures life. Michelangelo's Pauline Christ becomes an extreme example of an art that pushes verisimilitude beyond the limits that Christianity could bear, painted at the brink of stumbling into our world.⁵¹

All this is well known. Gilio's words are often quoted in modern scholarship on Michelangelo's art and the artist's somewhat troublesome relationship with the movements of religious reform in Rome during the third quarter of the sixteenth century. 52 Gilio's preference

⁴⁶ Ibid. 44: 'Però mi pare che Michelagnolo mancasse assai nel cristo che appare a San Paolo ne la sua conversione; il quale, fuor d'ogni gravità e maestà tale'.

⁴⁷ Ibid. 55: 'più a la verità et a la devozione attendessero, che a la pompa'.

⁴⁸ Ibid.: 'una certa lor prosopopea'.

⁴⁹ Ibid. 39–40.

⁵⁰ Ibid. 68: 'Credo certo che Michelagnolo [...] che per ignoranza non ha errato, ma più tosto ha voluto abbellire il pennello e compiacere a l'arte che al vero'.

⁵¹ Ibid. 44: 'Però mi pare che Michelagnolo mancasse assai nel cristo che appare a San Paolo ne la sua conversione; il quale, fuor d'ogni gravità e maestà tale'.

⁵² For Michelangelo and religious reform, see de Maio R., *Michelangelo e la controriforma* (Rome – Bari: 1978); Barnes B., *Michelangelo's Last Judgment: The Renaissance Response* (Berkeley: 1997); and Nagel A., *Michelangelo and the Reform of Art* (Cambridge – New York: 2000).

for medieval forms of painting has also been pointed out.⁵³ But his was not just a critique against anything modern per se, nor was it informed by a merely sentimental longing for a more ontologically grounded culture from which modern painting had tried to wrestle free. It has gone unnoticed that his criticism focuses on the interrelated notions of authorship and the mimetic tradition that had provided the conditions for the new style to come into being. It was not just that Michelangelo's paintings looked lifelike; Gilio thought that the artist's very power to invent, his ingenium, was invested with animation. Michelangelo produced those animated nude figures in the Sistine Chapel to show the 'ingenium and the excellence of the art that is in him'. They were exclusively painted to stage an author who wished 'to be known to posterity'. ⁵⁴ Gilio adds that medieval imagery instead appears to be devoid of 'invention [ingegnio]', that is, deprived of authorship. 55 The medieval artist, producing images of a rudimentary frontality, lacked 'an arousing and lifelike *ingegnio*'. ⁵⁶ For Gilio, the anonymity of the pre-Renaissance image is secured by its hiding the traces of life.

Presence/Absence

In what seems to anticipate criticism, Michelangelo aligned his authorship with a denial of life in the works that came later under attack. In the *Last Judgment*, Michelangelo portrayed himself in the skin held by Saint Bartholomew, whose features, not coincidently, resemble those of Aretino [Fig. 3].⁵⁷ Flat, frontal and emptied of life, the skin stands as the supreme counter-image to the pictorial language of foreshortened and animated bodies under attack in contemporary writings. The skin's flatness has recently been likened to medieval art, in which, we saw, Gilio also recognized a lack of foreshortening.⁵⁸ It is still impor-

⁵³ Nagel, Michelangelo 195.

⁵⁴ Ibid. 55: 'dal voler mostrare ai posteri l'eccellenza del suo ingegno e la eccellenza de l'arte che è in lui'.

 $^{^{55}\,}$ Ibid. 110–111: 'Il dipingere le sacre imagini oneste e devote [...], il che è paruto a' moderni vile, goffo, plebeo, antico, umile, senza ingegno et arte'.

⁵⁶ Ibid. 55: 'Le genti di quell tempo [...] erano più grosse, però attendevano a l'antichità, non avendo l'ingegno desto né vivo'.

⁵⁷ For the most exhaustive and most convincing treatment of the skin as a self-portrait, see Steinberg L., "The Line of Fate in Michelangelo's Paintings", *Critical Inquiry* 6 (1980) 423–436.

⁵⁸ Nagel, Michelangelo 197.

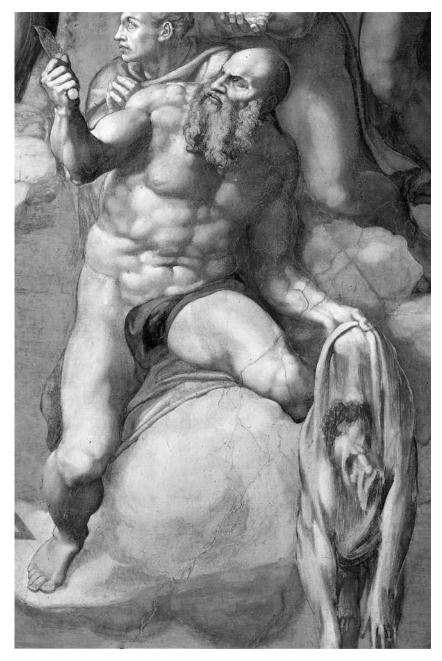


Fig. 3. [Col. Pl. XV] Michelangelo Buonarroti, Last Judgment (detail), 1541. Fresco, 1700×1330 cm. Rome, Vatican Museums.

tant to emphasize that Michelangelo's gesture to negate the vividness of his nudes is aligned with issues of authorship. A lack of animation appears in the very place where Michelangelo paints himself. The self, however, is here almost beyond recognition, unrecognizable not only for the defacement of his features but in its lifelessness also exorcized of any possible power to create the life that marks the figures in the rest of the fresco. Michelangelo's absence – both the absence of his lifelike *ingegno* and his face painted nearly beyond recognition – triples in the absence of Archangel Michael, his name saint. Usually present in depictions of the Last Judgment alongside Christ and still indicated in Michelangelo's preparatory drawings for the fresco, Michelangelo's decision not to represent the archangel can only be understood as a retreat from the specific kind of authorship that he had placed at the origin of the Roman Pietà and the works that followed: the angelic ability to create of 'Michael, the Angel' that had come to define the reception of his artistic persona and was ridiculed by Aretino.⁵⁹

The frescos in the Pauline Chapel that Michelangelo produced in the wake of the *Last Judgment* also engage with the interrelated issues of authorship and verisimilitude. Pope Paul III commissioned the *Conversion of Paul* and the *Crucifixion of Saint Peter* from Michelangelo in 1542, around the time when the *Last Judgment* was consecrated. Although the choice of subject-matter should definitely be attributed to the Pope, the *Conversion*, probably executed first, has sometimes been interpreted as a testament to the artist's personal life. Since

⁵⁹ Stephen Campbell was the first author to point out that Michelangelo's obliteration of Saint Michael from the fresco might be understood as a form of authorial disengagement; see Campbell, "Michelangelo, Rosso and the (Un)Divinity of Art" 614. Michelangelo would later endow the Nicodemus in the *Pietà* he carved as his grave memorial with his own features. When, in 1511, Jacopo Sansovino and Andrea Ferrucci were commissioned to execute statues of Apostles to complete a commission originally awarded to Michelangelo in 1503, they chose to represent their name saints, Saints James and Andrew.

⁶⁰ Michelangelo's Pauline frescos have received little attention. A good overview of the documents, state of preservation and technique of execution still is Baumgart F.E. – Biagetti B., Gli affreschi di Michelangelo e di L. Sabbatini e. F. Zuccari: Nella Cappella Paolina in Vaticano (Vatican City: 1934) 11–55, 69–81. Also see de Tolnay C., Michelangelo: The Final Period; Last Judgment, Frescoes of the Pauline Chapel, Last Pietàs (Princeton: 1965) 70–76, 135–148; and Steinberg L., Michelangelo's Last Paintings: The Conversion of St. Paul and the Crucifixion of St. Peter in the Cappella Paolina, Vatican Palace (New York: 1975).

⁶¹ For a reading of the fresco as a testament to Michelangelo's life, see von Einem H., "Michelangelos Fresken in der Cappella Paolina", in Hackelsberger B. – Himmelheber G. – Meier M. (eds.), *Festschrift Kurt Bauch* (Berlin: 1957) 193–204.

Dagobert Frey, Michelangelo's features have been read in those of Paul, depicted at the bottom of the fresco [Fig. 2].⁶² The figure's flattened nose, frowning expression and sunken eyes resemble the traits of his self-portrait as Nicodemus in the Florence *Pietà*. The portrait also squares with Michelangelo's age around the time he painted the image: sixty-six years old. Gilio would later make much out of the fact that Michelangelo misrepresented Paul's age, painted 'at the age of sixty' whereas Paul was 'around eighteen or twenty' at the time he was converted.⁶³ In representing himself as Paul, Michelangelo folds subject-matter into his own biography. He seems to suggest that Paul's conversion to Christianity after being blinded by Christ on his way to Damascus represents in some way a similar turning point for Michelangelo. But what kind of conversion was it?

Paul lies at the bottom of the scene, just fallen from his horse. His eyes are closed, blinded by the ray of light issued from above. There, Christ – the Christ that was subject of Gilio's critique – emerges from heaven within a rather large entourage of angels and genii. Paul is surrounded by his soldiers, who in various poses try to screen their eyes against the blazing light. The soldiers number twenty-two, a number large enough to perform another kind of screening. They almost completely block the landscape from view. The escaping horse helps to further occlude the props of nature. And where landscape is visible, it is abbreviated to a remarkable abstraction; only in the right background a walled city, presumably Damascus, is visible, not as a narratively irrelevant digression into naturalistic depiction but to ensure that we recognize that the conversion took place only shortly before Paul's arrival in the city where he was going to prosecute the followers of Christ.

Michelangelo never indulged much in the backdrops of natural digression, but here its absence approaches a profound strangeness. Vasari singled out its peculiarity. 'Michelangelo has only attested [...] to the perfection of art, for there are neither landscapes, nor trees, nor buildings; nor are there to be found any sorts of distraction [varietà] and charms [vaghezze]'. ⁶⁴ Just six years prior to painting the Cappella Paolina,

⁶² Frey D., Michelangelo (Cologne: 1942) 35.

⁶³ Barocchi, *Trattati* II, 45: 'Mi pare ancora che Michelagnolo mancasse in quell San Paolo abbargliato ne la nova Capella, che, essendo egli di 18 o 20 anni, l'abbia fatto di 60'.

⁶⁴ Vasari, *Vite* VI, 76: 'Ha Michelagnolo atteso solo, come s'è detto altrove, alla perfezzione dell'arte, perché né paesi vi sono, né alberi, né casamenti; né anche certe varietà e vaghezze dell'arte vi si veggono'.

the artist himself had criticized in text the props of nature he had now finally managed to liquidate in paint. In Francisco de Holanda's *Four Dialogues*, we encounter Michelangelo ranting against those painters who 'paint stuffs and masonry, the green grass of the fields, the shadow of trees, and rivers and bridges, which they call landscapes, with many figures on this side and many on that'. Michelangelo's wording does not express a mere artistic preference for the male nude, as Vasari seems to imply, but a wholesale negation of the tradition of mimetic painting. He considered the painters of landscapes just one example of those artists who 'paint to deceive the external eye'.⁶⁵

Much of Michelangelo's writing is concerned with sensory deception and the need to control knowledge gained through the eye.⁶⁶ In a poem addressed to Tommaso Cavalieri he wrote:

For if my soul weren't created equal to God, it would wish for nothing more than outward beauty, which pleases the eye [c' agli occhi piace]; but since that's so deceptive, it rises beyond that, to the universal form.⁶⁷

⁶⁵ De Holanda F., Da pintura antiga. Introdução e notas de Angel González Garcia (Lisbon: 1983) 235-236: 'Muito desejo de saber, pois stamos nesta materia, que cousa é o pintar de Frandes, e quem satisfaz, porque me parece mais devoto que o modo italiano. A pintura de Frandes, respondeu devagar o pintor, satisfará, senhora, geralmente, a qualquer devoto, mais que nenhuma de Italia, que lhe nunca fará chorar uma só lagrima, e a de Frandes muitas; isto não polo vigor e bondade d'aquela pintura, mas pola bondade d'aquele tal devoto. A molheres parecerá bem, principalmente as muito velhas, ou as muita moças, e assi mesmo a frades e a freiras, e a alguns fidalgos desmusicos da verdadeira harmonia. Pintam em Frandes propriamente pera enganar a vista exterior, ou cousas que vos alegrem ou de que não possaes dizer mal, assi como santos e profetas. O seu pintar é trapos, maçonerias, verduras de campos, sombras d'arvores, e rios e pontes, a que chamam paisagens, e muitas feguras para cá e muitas para acolá. E tudo isto inda que pareça bem a alguns olhos, na verdade é feito sem razão nem arte, sem symetria nem proporção, sem advertencia do escolher nem despejo, e finalmente sem nenhuma sustancia nem nervo'. I have slightly adjusted the translation in de Holanda F., Diálogos em Roma (1538). Conversations with Michelangelo Buonarroti, ed. and tr. G.D. Folliero-Metz (Heidelberg: 1998) 76-77.

⁶⁶ The way that Michelangelo's writing forms a poetic frame of reference for understanding the problems of sight, which are so central in his religious painting, remains unstudied. For helpful remarks on the relation between Michelangelo's poetry and portraits of mortals, see Saslow J., "The Unconsummated Portrait: Michelangelo's Poems About Art", in Golahmy A. (ed.), *The Eye of the Poet: Studies in the Reciprocity of the Visual and the Literary Arts from the Renaissance to the Present* (Lewisburg: 1996) 79–101.

⁶⁷ Saslow J., *The Poetry of Michelangelo: An Annotated Translation* (New Haven – London: 1991) 236–237 (no. 105).

Composed in 1541, the poem not only lends credibility to Michelangelo's words in de Holanda's Dialogues, 68 but also offers a poetic frame of understanding for the image of Paul, begun in the year Michelangelo finished his poem. The Conversion of Paul centers on the truth of blindness. The man lies depicted in the very moment he is losing corporeal sight. The loss of sight is repeated in the rest of the image, which exchanges the depiction of life and nature for a non-landscape of vagueness. Leo Steinberg already saw Paul's conversion resonating in Michelangelo's renunciation of veristic painting. 'The strength of the body', Steinberg wrote, 'appears ironically belittled [...]. The human anatomy undergoes strange revisions: waists thicken while arms shrink and dwindle'. 'Michelangelo', he proceeded, 'was creating neither a literal narrative nor an anachronistic abstraction, but a symbolic structure wherein the whole machinery of Renaissance naturalism [...] was being diverted to metaphor'. Paul, in whose face the author recognizes the artist's ageing feature, becomes a creature shedding its skin: 'As Paul's lighted-hued body falls free, his opaque outer garment, in which his left foot is still entangled, drops from him'.⁶⁹

Michelangelo's departure from the culture of lifelike representation he had himself helped to shape was yet more specific than Steinberg suggested. Artist and subject are not bound in the notion of conversion

⁶⁸ As far as I know, Michelangelo's poetry has never been integrated in discussions about the credibility of Michelangelo's voice in de Holanda's Dialogues, in spite of the fact that both the Dialogues and the poems deal with the same issues of sight. For an especially unbalanced effort to attribute Michelangelo's words in the Dialogues to de Holanda himself, see Agoston L.C., "Male/Female, Italy/Flanders, Michelangelo/ Vittoria Colonna", Renaissance Quarterly 58 (2005) 1175-1219; id., "Holanda's Michelangelo and the drama of cultural difference", Word & Image 22 (2006) 54-67; and "Michelangelo as Voice versus Michelangelo as Text", Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies 36 (2006) 135-167. For the most advanced arguments in favor of a reading of the Dialogues as a trustworthy source of Michelangelo's opinion, see Bury J.B., Two Notes on Francisco de Holanda (London: 1981). As important it is to study the literary conventions that shaped de Holanda's text, any testing of the Dialogues as a trustworthy source of Michelangelo's theory of art must involve an investigation of the image theories the works themselves reveal. For a successful attempt to connect Michelangelo's opinion in the Dialogues to contemporary works of art, such as the Last Judgment, see Nagel, Michelangelo 192-193. The familiar tone of a letter de Holanda sent to Michelangelo suggests that the two were on friendly terms during the former's stay in Rome; see Barocchi – Ristori, *Carteggio* V, 9–10. ⁶⁹ Steinberg, *Michelangelo's Last Paintings* 21, 39.

per se but find a common ground in blindness – the vehicle of both Paul's renascence and Michelangelo's renouncement of a deceptive art grounded in corporeal sensation. The loss of verisimilitude so evident in the abbreviated landscape and otherworldly anatomy is condensed in a profound distrust of sensory experience, of blindness to the world and the final death of its twin-brother: authorship. Now it is Michelangelo who is located at the bottom of the picture, not as the master of perception who was once present as the authoritative force of his own creation, but as a painter whose invention can no longer be understood as having originated from *his* subjective perspective.

Out of Focus

At age sixty-one, Michelangelo began to lose his vision. Two letters of 1537, written when he was working on the *Last Judgment*, report his presbyopia (far-sightedness).⁷⁰ He is no longer able to carry out detailed work. His vision must have further deteriorated. At a certain moment he copied a medical description from a treatise on the eye on a sheet preserved in the Codex Vaticanus.⁷¹

Rather than giving up on the medium that most demanded the precision of sight, Michelangelo withdrew in drawing. The Pauline frescos were the last large-scale works he did. In the early 1550s, Michelangelo began to draw a series of Crucifixions, six of which survive, dispersed over collections in London, Paris and Oxford [for example, Fig. 4 and 5]. They all show a frontally depicted Christ on the Cross, accompanied by two mourners, probably the Virgin and Saint John. The drawings are marked by a peculiar lack of focus. Details are absent, Christ's face is hardly discernable, contours are repeatedly redrawn; and the abandonment of stylus in favor of charcoal, heavily smeared out in parts of the drawings, heightens these works' dreamlike haziness. Michelangelo's loss of vision is inherited by the viewer, who is no longer able to indulge in the sharp focus of verisimilitude that marked

⁷⁰ Michelangelo's eye problems are mentioned in two letters by Giovan Maria della Porta to Francesco Maria della Rovere, Duke of Urbino. See Gronau G., "Die Kunstbestrebungen der Herzöge von Urbino", Jahrbuch der Königlich Preuszischen Kunstsammlungen 27 (1906) Beiheft, 9.

⁷¹ Bardeschi Ciulich L. – Barocchi P. (eds.), *I ricordi di Michelangelo* (Florence: 1970) 362–367.

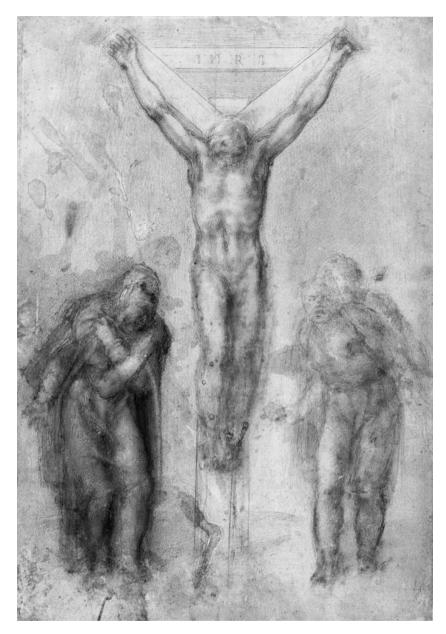


Fig. 4. [Col. Pl. XVI (left)] Michelangelo Buonarroti, Crucifixion, 1550–1564. Black chalk heightened with lead white on paper, 41.3×28.6 cm. London, British Museum.

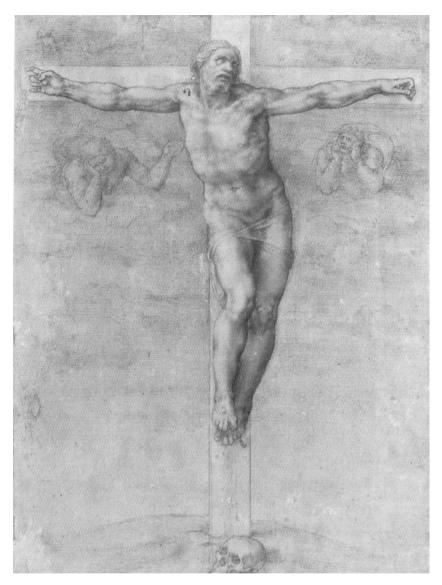


Fig. 5. [Col. Pl. XVI (right)] Michelangelo Buonarroti, Crucifixion, c. 1538–1541. Black chalk on paper, 37×27 cm. London, The British Museum.

the artist's earlier frescoed oeuvre and the carefully worked out presentation drawings made for Tommaso Cavalieri and Vittoria Colonna. Michael Hirst was the first to connect this shift in Michelangelo's drawing practice to the artist's eye problems. 72 Yet, pace Hirst, a few of those late drawings show a remarkable variation in focus, suggesting that blurred outlines and a lack of detail were more a matter of choice than of necessity. One telling example is a sheet in the British Museum [Fig. 4].⁷³ The faces of the three figures are almost completely effaced; the Virgin and Saint John lack eyes. But then, rising above the muddle of unfocused lines, there are Christ's hands: sharply drawn, the five fingers of his right hand clearly distinguishable. Michelangelo insists on anecdotal detailing. The index finger and thumb run parallel to the wood of the cross and his other fingers are slightly curved, as if his right hand is numb. His left hand is contracted to a fist, with pain, we can imagine. And then there is the INRI monogram. Carefully crafted over the horizontal carrier of the cross without a ruler, it includes a sharply drawn N and I's fitted with well-placed serifs.

Earlier scholarship has also attributed some intention to Michelangelo's changing draftsmanship. Most scholars agree with Charles de Tolnay that the late drawings somehow register as internalized images of Christ, as inner prayers whose making was informed by the artist's growing preoccupation with death and afterlife, a theme that also informed some of Michelangelo's late poems. All Old age, the argument goes, came with remorse about a life lived in the service of art instead of religion. In one often-cited poem, Michelangelo confessed that art had become an idol to him, and he embraced a mental image of Christ at the cross to redeem his former idolatry — an image that is indeed evocative of the Crucifixions drawings. Other poems similarly suggest that he began to deplore his earlier oeuvre. Still, de

⁷² Hirst M., Michelangelo and his Drawings (New Haven – London: 1988) 8.

⁷³ The uneven focus in the drawing has also been pointed out by Chapman H., Wichelangelo Drawing: Closer to the Master (New Hayen – London: 2005) 282

Michelangelo Drawings: Closer to the Master (New Haven – London: 2005) 282.

74 De Tolnay, The Final Period 10–15; de Tolnay C., The Art and Thought of Michelangelo (New York: 1964) 81–82. De Tolnay was followed by Chapman, Michelangelo Drawings 249. Recently, Philip Sohm argued that Michelangelo's old-age style was informed by a Neo-Platonic sense of bodily detachment; see Sohm P., The Artist Grows Old: The Aging of Art and Artists in Italy, 1500–1800 (New Haven – London: 2007) 58–71, 77.

⁷⁵ Saslow, *The Poetry of Michelangelo* 476 (no. 285). See Wittkower R., "A Newly Discovered Drawing by Michelangelo", *The Burlington Magazine* 78 (1941) 159–160.

⁷⁶ See the poems in ibid. 277 (no. 132), 452 (no. 267), 484 (no. 290). It might be pointed out here that Michelangelo's reconsideration was part of a more encompass-

Tolnay and others never explained how exactly a psychology of old age and a deepening of religiosity would express itself in unfocused contours.⁷⁷ Instead of interpreting the late drawings as a psychologically constructed *Spätstil*, they might be better understood as historically specific response to the tradition of Renaissance painting and the artist's own ocuvre.

Michelangelo's meditations on blindness intersect with contemporary criticism against the cult of seeing. In sermons of 1539 that were published two years later, the popular preacher and acquaintance of Michelangelo Bernardino Ochino turned a critical eve to the cult of sight.⁷⁸ In one of them, Ochino pressed his public to contemplate Christ on the cross 'neither with the eyes of the senses, nor with corporeal sight, but with [...] the eyes of the body closed in order to contemplate better'. With closed eyes Ochino saw an image that resembled Michelangelo's drawing. Blind to corporeal sight, you 'enter into that holy haziness, that learned ignorance'. 79 Ochino condemns what he calls the sensuali, those people who contemplate the suffering of Christ with their senses and indulge in the 'suffering, anguishes, torments and so many beatings'. Sensuali take Christ to be too human; they focus too much on their own lived experience, which makes them forget about the fact that Christ took his suffering quietly because he knew that his death would redeem mankind. 80 Renaissance artists had

ing effort to rewrite the history of his own oeuvre. In the years he produced these new drawings, he burned most of his preparatory drawings for the Sistine Ceiling, the *Last Judgment* and the *Conversion of Paul*.

The expression of religious transcendentalism through unfocused contours was in the air when de Tolnay wrote on Michelangelo's drawings. I would not be surprised if de Tolnay was thinking of Mark Rothko. For an effort to see art historical praxis of the 1960s in relation to the religious values expressed in post-war (American) painting, see van Os H., "The Black Death and Sienese Painting, a Problem of Interpretation", *Art History* 4 (1981) 237–249.

⁷⁸ For Ochino and his writings, see Benrath K., Bernardino Ochino von Siena: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Reformation (Nieuwkoop: 1968). For Michelangelo and Ochino, see Campi E., Michelangelo e Vittoria Colonna: Un dialogo artistico-teologico ispirato da Bernardino Ochino, e altri saggi di storia dell'riforma (Turin: 1994) 9–77.

⁷⁹ Ochino Bernardino, *Prediche* [...] *predicate nella inclinita città di Venegia, del MDXXXIX* (Venice, Francesco di Alessandro Bindoni & Mapeo Pasini: 1541) fol. 29v–30r: 'ne con gli occhi del senso: ne con gli occhi materiali: ma con una viva fede informata di charita, e con gli occhi del corpo serrate per meglio potere contemplare: & entra in quella santa caligine, in quella dotta ignorantia: e troverai: che Christo su la Croce altro: che l'ardente sua carita non l'ha mosso a patire l'aspra morte per ricomperare l'anima'.

⁸⁰ Ibid. fol. 29v: 'Sono alcuni altri, che contemplano Christo in croce solamente in quelle pene, in quelli crociati, in quelli tormenti, in tanti flagella: in chiodato le mani,

explored exactly the kind of suffering that Ochino deplored: no better way to suggest life than in a contorted body of a man almost dying. They included Michelangelo. In one of the presentation drawings he made for Vittoria Colonna between 1538 and 1541, he shows Christ on the cross in a moment of extreme torment, his body twisting and his eyes opened wide depicted in the moment when Christ himself thought that God had forsaken him [Fig. 5]. Christ is drawn alive, a fact not only emphasized by the artist's biographer Ascanio Condivi, but also highlighted by Colonna herself. In a letter sent to the artist in gratitude of one of his drawings, she confessed never to have seen 'an image better made, more lively [più viva] and more finished'.81

Michelangelo's late drawings of the Crucifixion developed directly from the ones made for Colonna only to drain life out of them. They are of the same subject-matter and drawn on paper of similar size.82 The sheets are quite large, measuring about 40×30 cm, which might suggest that they, again in common with the Colonna drawings, served a self-sufficient purpose rather than a preparatory one.83 That suggestion is strengthened by the clear versos of the sheets. There is, however, no proof to suggest that Michelangelo gave away the later drawings. The early provenance of the two drawings from the British Museum (including our Fig. 4) indicates that the artist kept them in his studio until his death. He must have considered them somehow finished, though. In some sheets, the background is indicated with crosshatching, a rare practice in the artist's drawn oeuvre that also occurs in two of his finished gift drawings, the Crucifixion he gave to Colonna and the so-called *Sogno*. The sketchy appearance of the sheet does not result from a lack of finish. Michelangelo probably produced his drawings as private yet finished meditations on the nature of art.

The unfocused drawings of the 1550s and '60s contrast sharply with the precision of the Colonna sheets, studied by Colonna with

e gli piedi, aperto il costato: e perche son sensuali, se ne doleno d'uno amor naturale: e per one hanno compassione, e piangono il dolor di christo. [...] E pero non e buono pianto d'amore, e di charita questo: ma di senso, e naturale [...]'. For a similar argument made by Savonarola, see Nagel, *Michelangelo* 36–38.

⁸¹ Barocchi – Ristori, *Carteggio* IV, 104: 'Non se po vedere più ben fatta, più viva et più finita imagine'.

⁶² This has been pointed out by Hirst M., *Michelangelo Draftsman* (Milan: 1988) 146.
⁸³ De Tolnay argued that the drawings served as preparation for a carved Cavalry group of three statues, an argument that seems to contradict his earlier statements that the drawings were produced as private prayers; see de Tolnay, *The Final Period* 23. For arguments against de Tolnay's statement, see Hirst, *Michelangelo Draftsman* 146.

a magnifying glass.84 Nothing in those earlier drawings prepares us for the loss of life in the late ones. Christ's body is lifeless; his head hangs down covered by his hair. The contorted body in Colonna's sheet, still reminiscent of the foreshortened acrobats that occupied his earlier work, is here replaced by a figure seen in a strictly frontal position. A lack of life in the body is echoed by a similar depravity in the rendering of landscape. The figures of Christ and the two mourning figures miss any grounding in the natural world; they hover in a vacuous space. The human skull that suggested Golgotha ('the hill of the skull') in the earlier Crucifixions is now gone. But the background is not just white. The careful hatching enveloping the figures serves to put them in indeterminate space. Landscape is not just obliterated. It is literally crossed out. These drawings are no longer part of an aesthetics of lived experience that put the Crucifixion against a backdrop of landscape and villages, that popular way of representing biblical scenes that Michelangelo already raged against in de Holanda's Dialogues.85 The focus is now exclusively on deadness projected against a barren world of nothingness. In the drawings in Oxford and Paris, the cross even stops casting a shadow on the ground.86 Disjointed from the ground occupied by the two mourning figures, it registers more easily as a vision than the perception of a wooden structure that shares its space with the mourners.

Michelangelo's departure from the modern language of verisimilitude went hand in hand with a copying of medieval examples in his art, suggesting that a lack of focus and a lack of life could not only be understood as a mere resistance to recent art but also as a return in time. In 1553, Condivi already recognized that the Y-shaped cross in Michelangelo's drawings was similar to the cross that was carried by the Bianchi through Florence in 1348.⁸⁷ Recently, Paul Joannides catalogued more adoptions of medieval imagery in the drawings.⁸⁸ An almost obsessive insistence on the frontal depiction of Christ, for instance, harks back to medieval Crucifixes, and so does the peculiar

⁸⁴ Barocchi - Ristori, Carteggio IV, 104.

See Gadamer H.G., Wahrheit und Methode, 3rd rev. ed. (Tübingen: 1972) 52–76.
 Oxford, Ashmolean Museum, WA 1846.89 (27.8 × 23.4 cm); Paris, Musée du

Louvre, no. 700 (43.2 \times 28.9 cm).

⁸⁷ Condivi A., Vita di Michelagnolo Buonarroti, ed. G. Nencioni (Florence: 1998) 61.

⁸⁸ Joannides P. "'Primitivism' in the Late Drawings of Michelangelo: The Master's Construction of an Old-Age Style", in Smyth C.H. (ed.), *Michelangelo Drawings* (Washington: 1992) 245–261.

way that Christ is nailed to the cross with his arms stretched above his head, a motif taken from thirteenth-century wooden Crucifixions from the Pisani workshop. It is still worth stressing that Michelangelo is here not just incorporating the works of famous thirteenth- and fourteenthcentury predecessors such as Cimabue and Giotto, which, according to the model proposed above, contemporaries would have recognized as modern masterpieces. In his later orientation on Duecento and Trecento, Michelangelo deliberately opts for anonymous, generic works, such as the medieval Crucifixes that could be found in almost every Italian church. His interest in medieval works is certainly not informed by historicism in the sense that Panofsky used it. (Condivi, presumably informed by Michelangelo, was in fact wrong in dating the Bianchi cross to 1348; the Bianchi only arose in 1399).89 The Crucifixes adopted in Michelangelo's drawings were copied as religious artifacts, not as historically grounded works of art. They belong to that temporal vacuum of the authorless work.

That is also why the anonymous work of Northern masters could further serve Michelangelo to disengage his art from the Renaissance model of authorship. The composition of a drawing of the *Lamentation*, now in the British Museum and dated to about 1530, is based on an anonymous German print, which, although made in the second half of the fifteenth century, bears all the characteristics Michelangelo contemporaries recognized as pre-Renaissance; 90 in the sixteenth century, Gothic architecture was still known as the 'German manner'. 91 The broken body of Christ sunken into the Virgin's lap in Michelangelo's version sustains the lack of volume and spatial differentiation so evident in the German model. Michelangelo's adoption of the German print stands in stark contrast to the practice of his contemporary Jacopo Pontormo, who modeled his frescos of the Passion of Christ on Albrecht Dürer's print series of the same subject – prints by so famous an artist that Vasari still recognized Pontormo's emulation of that 'excellent German painter'. 92 Michelangelo turned to anonymity instead.

⁸⁹ See Bornstein D.E., The Bianchi of 1399: Popular Devotion in Late Medieval Italy (Ithaca: 1993); and Nagel A., "Gifts for Michelangelo and Vittoria Colonna", The Art Bulletin 79 (1997) 667, note 96.

⁹⁰ London, British Museum, 1896–7–10–1 (28.2 × 26.2 cm). Aby Warburg was the first to point out the similarities between Michelangelo's drawing and the print; see Warburg A., "Die Grablegung Rogers in dem Uffizien (1903)", reprinted in id., *Gesammelte Schriften* (Nendeln: 1969) 216.

⁹¹ Vasari, Vite II, 22.

⁹² Ibid. V, 319–320.

Michelangelo's close friend Vittoria Colonna understood a resistance to the maniera moderna as a gesture of artistic hubris. Looking at a medieval image of the Virgin supposedly painted by Saint Luke, she paused on the fact that 'it doesn't show life'. Interestingly enough, she interprets that lack not only as a feature of the 'humble manner', suggesting that medieval art is more devout than modern painting, she also understands it as a deliberate artistic choice on the part of Saint Luke, 'perhaps disdaining the grave lights and proud shadows of art'.93 Colonna does not view the 'imperfect' appearance of medieval images as resulting from some sort of technical or theoretical shortcoming of the medieval artist - as Ghiberti and Vasari would have it - but as a religiously informed unwillingness to assert artistic authorship. Although Saint Luke poses here as something of an author, his artistic persona could only be understood as a mediator of 'that highest design [alto disegno]', that 'concetto of the mysteries of God', which Luke painted without the interference of his creative persona other than one of restraint. Images like the Madonna painted by Luke were commonly understood at the time as acheiropoetoi, 'images made without human hands'. 94 Devoid of life, they hide the traces of human authorship. They posed as religiously more authoritative than authored works of art, their lack of verisimilitude indicative of a strengthened religiosity. In 1587, Giovanni Armenini could write, with some discontent, of the widespread practice of stuffing Italian churches with 'panels with certain figures painted in the Greek manner, rude [goffissime], sentimental and completely smoked, [...] put there with no other reason than to

⁹³ Colonna V., *Rime*, ed. A. Bullock (Bari: 1982) 188: 'Mentre che quanto dentro avea concetto/ dei misteri di Dio ne facea degno/ la Vergin Luca oprava egli ogni ingegno/ per formar vero il bel divino aspetto,/ ma del' immensa idea si colmo il petto/ avea che, come un vaso d'acqua pregno/ che salir non può, fuor l'alto disegno/ a poco a poco usci manco e imperfetto./ In parte finse l'aer dolce e grave;/ que vivo no 'l mostrò, forse sdegnando/ de l'arte I gravi lumi e la fiera ombra;/ basta che 'l modo umil, l'atto soave,/ a Dio rivolge, accende, move, e quando/ si mira il cor d'ogni altra nebbia sgombra'. The poem is quoted in Deswarte-Rosa S., "Vittoria Colonna und Michelangelo in san Silvestro al Quirinale nach den *Gesprüchen* des Francisco de Holanda", in Ferino-Pagden S. (ed.), *Vittoria Colonna: Dichterin und Muse Michelangelos* (Vienna: 1997) 363. It has also been discussed by Nagel, *Michelangelo* 13, who does not note the relation between lifelike imagery and authorship that I point out above.

⁹⁴ See Kitzinger E., "The Cult of Images in the Age Before Iconoclasm", *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 8 (1954) 112–115; Snyder J., "What Happens by Itself in Photography?", in Cohen T. – Guyer P. – Putnam H. (eds.), *Pursuits of Reason: Essays in Honor of Stanley Cavell* (Lubbock, TX: 1993) 361–373; and Wolf G., *Schleier und Spiegel: Traditionen des Christusbildes und die Bildkonzepte der Renaissance* (Munich: 2002).

move [the people to] devotion, instead of being an ornament to those places'.⁹⁵

Conclusion

Michelangelo's late Crucifixion drawings register less as historical reconstructions than as efforts to re-align the image with that timeless pre-Renaissance epoch between the fall of the Roman Empire and the rise of the naturalistic tradition – that strange chunk of time occupied by anonymous masters that could also include the un-Renaissance regions outside Italy. Although Michelangelo and his contemporaries knew that Cimabue predated the anonymous German master a century and a half, the latter was considered further removed in time. His anonymity secured him producing a print in the Gothic manner. In the minds of Michelangelo and his contemporaries, the period of the 'centuries in between' was not historical precisely for its lack of authors. As a consequence, medievalism was not so much understood as the retrieval of a historical past but as an imagination of an alternative to modern painting. That is also why Michelangelo's late drawings do not look like anything ever produced in medieval times, a period known for its lack of drawings. Defining the Middle Ages as nothing more precisely than what modernity was not provided the space to include works of art that we would today sooner qualify as highlights of the maniera moderna than as exercises in medievalism. They include those instances in the Sistine and Pauline Chapels, where the absence of life overshadows the portrayal of the self.

⁹⁵ Armenini G., *De' veri precetti della pittura*, ed. M. Gorreri (Turin: 1999) 213–214: 'Né voglio quivi lasciare in dietro quello che, non ci essendo, è sopra modo biasimevole, conciosiaché io (come s'è detto) avendo pratticato per diverse città et essendo stato menato per molti palagi e case, e fino nelle camere secrete, le quali ho trovato splendidissime et abondevoli d' adobamenti di tapez[z]arie, di borccati e d' altre massarizie minute, e tutte ho veduto essere con mirabil arte fornite, eccetto di pitture delle sacre imagine, le quali erano la maggior parte quadretti di certe figure fatte alla greca, goffissime, dispiacevoli e tutte affumicate, le quali ad ogni altra cosa parevano esservi state poste, fuori che a muover divozione overo a fare ornamento a simil luoghi'.

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JEAN MABILLON'S MIDDLE AGES: ON MEDIEVALISM, TEXTUAL CRITICISM, AND MONASTIC IDEALS*

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This chapter focuses on Jean Mabillon, one of the most prominent connoisseurs of medieval texts in the late seventeenth century, a founding father of textual criticism and the discipline of diplomatics. The main concern lies with his approach to medieval texts, but the chapter rests also on an interest in the challenges implied in considering this approach as a matter of medievalism. The interrogative point of departure is taken from Leslie Workman's conception of medievalism and its provocative amalgam of academic and popular culture: 'The study of the Middle Ages on the one hand, and the use of the Middle Ages in everything from fantasy to social reform on the other, are two sides of the same coin'. Workman's definition of medievalism as related to the study of the Middle Ages seems straightforward. Viewed in this light, Mabillon comes across as a full-blooded medievalist insofar as he studies medieval texts. Nonetheless it seems worthwhile to keep open the question: is Jean Mabillon a medievalist and is his study of medieval texts an example of medievalism?

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Workman L.J., "The Future of Medievalism", in Gallant J. (ed.), Medievalism: The Year's Work for 1995 (Holland, MI: 1999) 12, Workman's italics. See also Utz R.—Shippey T. (eds.), Medievalism in the Modern World: Essays in Honour of Leslie Workman (Turnhout: 1998), which is specifically concerned with the use of the Middle Ages, in Workman's sense. For a methodological deliberation which has been an inspiration in this context see Petersen N.H., "Medievalism and Medieval Reception: A Terminological Question?", in Fugelso K. (ed.), Defining Medievalism(s), Studies in Medievalism 17 (2009) 36–44.

What do we study when we turn our attention to Early Modern medievalism, or Early Modern conceptions of the Middle Ages? Do we trace the terminological denominations of the period which extends from, roughly, the sixth to the fifteenth century? Do we investigate questions and concepts related to periodization and to historiographical ambitions to impose structure on history? Or do we pursue the ways in which Early Modern people handled this period? That is, do we consider their methods, the extent to which they regarded the Middle Ages as something other than their own time, the tools with which they bridged the gap between past and present? This essay traces some of these aspects in selected texts by Jean Mabillon.

Jean Mabillon

Jean Mabillon (1632–1707) was a towering figure in the learned world of the late seventeenth century. With Saint-Germain-des-Prés as his *point de repère*, he roamed the erudite circles of Paris, conversing with scholars, both monastic and secular, such as the philologist Charles Du Cange, the orientalist Barthélemy d'Herbelot, and the numismatist Jean Foi Vaillant.² Mabillon was a scholar, and he was a monk. Like his contemporaries Le Nain de Tillemont and Leibniz he sought to reach the perfect balance between critical scholarship and religious certainty.³

Born in humble circumstances, Mabillon began a theological education in Rheims in 1644 after adolescent signs of intellectual potential, and entered the Maurist monastery of Saint Remy in 1653.⁴ His

² On the members of this group and their meetings at Saint-Germain-des-Prés twice a week, see Barret-Kriegel B., *Les Historiens et la Monarchie*, 4 vols. (Paris: 1988) I, *Jean Mabillon* 52–59, and Neveu B., "Mabillon et l'historiographie gallicane", in Hammer K. – Voss J. (eds.), *Historische Forschung im 18. Jahrhundert* (Bonn: 1976) 32.

³ Ibid. 29.

⁴ The Maurist branch of the Benedictine Order, one of many monastic reform initiatives in the early seventeenth century, spread from the congregation of Saint Vanne in Lorraine into France. The congregation took their name from Benedict of Nurcia's disciple Maurus, who allegedly brought the Rule of Benedict to France and it received papal approval in 1621. The congregation was characterized by its strict adherence to the Rule in asceticism and silence but has above all become known for its dedication to study. King P., *Western Monasticism* (Kalamazoo: 1999) 287–294. The congregation saw a significant expansion under Richelieu's general reform of the French monasteries in the 1630s, Mellot J.-D., "Les Mauristes et l'édition érudite:

monastic trajectory took him through several locations which, with hindsight, seem of formative or indicatory significance. From 1656 on, he was at Nogent, where he engaged in an excavation of the church in order to find the grave of the former abbot of the monastery, the medieval chronicler Gilbert of Nogent;⁵ from 1662 on, he was at Saint-Denis, where he was left in charge of the collections of manuscripts, crucifixes, and relics; and finally in 1664 he arrived at the Maurist headquarters of Saint-Germain-des-Prés, where he was to stay. The Parisian monastery was the home of Maurist textual criticism, and Mabillon became assistant to the director of its editorial enterprise, Luc d'Achery.⁶ In this capacity he participated in the preparation of the critical edition of the works of Bernard of Clairvaux, Opera omnia Bernardi, the first volume of which was published in 1667. In 1690 appeared Mabillon's revised version of the edition, which later entered Patrologia Latina and thus became the standard Bernard edition until Leclercy, Rochais, and Talbot's Sancti Bernardi Opera (1957–1977). He was a collaborator on the Maurist corpus Acta Sanctorum O.S.B., the first volume of which appeared in 1668. Moreover he produced, among others, a liturgical history, 8 a treatise which opposed the use of monastic prisons⁹ and another in favour of restraint in the dating of relics, ¹⁰ and works on the history of the Benedictine Order.¹¹

In the course of the years 1667–1703 Mabillon journeyed in France, Germany, Switzerland, Austria, and Italy; he traversed monastic

un gallicanisme éditorial", in Hurel D.-O. (ed.), L'Érudition et commerce épistolaire: Jean Mabillon et la tradition monastique (Paris: 2003) 74.

⁵ Barret-Kriegel, Jean Mabillon 18–21.

⁶ The Maurists published the works of, among others, Augustine (1679–1700), Ambrose (1686–1706), Jerome (1693–1706), and Gregory of Tours (1699).

⁷ This work was carried out in parallel with an *Acta Sanctorum*, published by the Antwerp Jesuits, the Bollandists, which elicited a methodological treatise by Daniel Papebroche: *Propylaeum Antiquarium circa Veri ac Falsi Discrimen in Vetustis Membranis* (1675). Mabillon's *De re diplomatica* countered Papebroche's work, and eventually Papebroche deferred to Mabillon, Knowles D., *The Historian and Character* (Cambridge: 1963) 222–23. Edelman ascribes the late seventeenth-century surge in text-critical endeavours to, among other things, the fact that the decrease in confessional turbulence left historians, most of whom were ecclesiastics, free to engage themselves in manuscript study rather than polemic, Edelman N., *Attitudes of Seventeenth-Century France towards the Middle Ages* (New York: 1946) 59.

⁸ Liturgia gallicana (1685).

⁹ Réflexions sur les prisons des ordres réligieux (1693).

¹⁰ Eusebii romani ad Theophilum gallum epistola de cultu sanctorum ignotorum (1698), a fictive letter addressed to a Protestant.

¹¹ For example Annales ordinis S. Benedictini (1703).

archives, collected information about the history of the monasteries, and copied charters. The use of charters as a source for monastic history was a novelty, and it soon became evident that many of them were unreliable and had been forged either in the Middle Ages or later in order to acquire land or prestige. 12 It was his work with these documents that led to Mabillon's identification of sets of criteria which might be used in assessing the authenticity of historical texts. These criteria were presented in his main work De re diplomatica (1681), and were to establish him as the father of diplomatics. In De re diplomatica, Mabillon describes how the authenticity of a text must be evaluated on the basis of features such as material, seal, script, grammar, style, allusions to contemporary events, and references in other works to the work in question. Some of these things had been treated by Francesco Petrarca and Lorenzo Valla, but Mabillon's approach was partly more systematic, partly characterized by that neutrality, in stark contrast to Valla's polemical rhetoric, which the Maurist himself promoted. It makes sense that Mabillon's criteria were developed in the age of Descartes, who was to become his posthumous neighbour, monumentwise, in the Church of Saint-Germain-des-Prés.

Terminologies

Although the idea of a middle age between the golden age of Antiquity and the present had been current for several centuries, the seventeenth century was still to some extent struggling to find its terminological footing. The development has been charted with diligence by Jürgen Voss,¹³ who has demonstrated that in seventeenth-century France there is a frequent use of terms such as *moyen âge, moyens temps, medium aevum, media saecula*, and *media aetas*, but with varied implications. For example, Furetière (1690) has no entry on the Middle Ages *per se*, but touches upon the concept under the entry for 'moyen': 'On dit aussi, qu'un Auteur est du *moyen* âge, pour dire, qu'il n'est ni ancien, ni nou-

¹² Knowles, The Historian 221–222.

¹³ Voss J., *Das Mittelalter im historischen Denken Frankreichs* (Munich: 1972) 63–74. See further his account of the seventeenth-century appraisal of the Middle Ages, 126–137, including the question of the definition and judgement of 'Gothic' architecture, 134–137, and of the way in which the Middle Ages fare in a rhetorical historiography the main aim of which is to demonstrate the continuity and glory of the French monarchy, 139–143.

veau'.14 The dictionary of the French Academy (1694) is more chronologically specific: 'On apelle "Auteurs du moyen âge" les Auteurs qui ont écrit depuis la décadence de l'Empire Romain jusques vers la fin du dixième siècle, ou environ'. 15 This degree of precision, however, seems rare for the time. Sometimes conceptions of the 'middle' are combined with that of infimus, lowest; infimum aevum, infimum saeculum, and so forth. 16 Infimus, the superlative of inferus, may have a neutral meaning, the latest, but may also imply a qualification, as is clear in the description in Furetière of its French equivalent la basse latinité, 'la basse Latinité, la corruption de la langue Latine'. ¹⁷ It is sometimes employed to distinguish between the time of Charlemagne as the middle and what is presently know as the high Middle Ages as the latest age, 18 as for instance in Charles Du Cange's dictionary of middle and late Latin: Glossarium Mediae et Infimae Latinitatis (1678). ¹⁹ Summing up Voss's comprehensive study in a few words we may conclude that in Mabillon's world, moyen âge and related terms are generally used to distinguish between authors, artists, works of art, or language from different periods rather than as a term which denominates a period in its own right. People and artefacts are defined as medieval in order to be situated within a diachronic span, not to be characterized per se; and the defining terms belong in the realm of periodization rather than conceptualization.

Given the nature and age of the documents that led Mabillon to write *De re diplomatica*, we might assume that the work abounds in terms with medieval implications. But this is not the case. The full title of the work is: *De re diplomatica in libri VI: In quibus quidquid ad veterum instrumentum antiquitatem, materiam, scripturam & stilum; quidquid ad sigilla, monogrammata, subscriptiones ac notas chronologicas; quidquid inde ad antiquariam, historicam, forensemque disciplinam pertinet, explicatur & illustratur.*²⁰ As

¹⁴ Furetière Antoine, *Le dictionnaire universel* (The Hague – Rotterdam, Arnout & Reinier Leers: 1690; photographic reprint, Paris: 1978) 'moyen'.

¹⁵ Quoted from Voss, *Das Mittelalter* 64. Voss comments on the untypical specificity on p. 66.

¹⁶ Ibid. 393–406.

¹⁷ Furetière, Le dictionnaire universel 'bas'.

¹⁸ Voss, Das Mittelalter 68–69.

¹⁹ Voss, following Edelman, identifies the implied definition of medieval authors in Du Cange's *Glossarium Mediae et Infimae Latinitatis* (1678) as authors who write between 270 and 1346, Voss, *Das Mittelalter* 67.

²⁰ Paris, Charles Robustel: 1709; first ed. Paris, Jean-Baptiste Coignard: 1681. Illustratively, the *Journal des sçavans* referred to *De re diplomatica* as 'Introduction à l'étude de

sole chronological marker the title thus gives the rather indefinite *vetus*. This seems to be representative for the treatise, and in his instructive *Belegliste* Voss lists only three occurrences from *De re diplomatica* of terms with implications of medieval.²¹ Speaking of seals, for example, Mabillon refers to several 'inferioris ætatis hominum epistolas' that he has seen,²² and in the passage on chronological indicators, he treats the ways in which dates are indicated by 'mediæ & infimæ ætatis homines'.²³ Generally, when in need of specific temporal indications, the Maurist employs either years or centuries or the reigns of kings or popes.

Periodization and Other Kinds of Structure

While notions of the Middle Ages may be useful for the identification of a particular period, they are, as we saw in the examples from Furetière, above all profitable with regard to periodization. The need to structure time is treated with a keen hermeneutical sense by Mabillon's contemporary Jacques-Bénigne Bossuet in the *Discours sur l'histoire universelle* (1681) written for his pupil, the Dauphin. The work traces, in Augustinian vein, the providential cohesion of the history of the Church as opposed to the fluctuations of profane history. At the beginning Bossuet takes his reader soaring in time and space

Comme donc en considérant une carte universelle vous sortez du pays où vous êtes né, et du lieu qui vous renferme, pour parcourir toute la terre habitable que vous embrassez par la pensée, avec toutes ses mers et tous ses pays; ainsi, en considérant l'abrégé chronologique, vous sortez des bornes étroites de votre âge, et vous vous étendez dans tous les siècles. [...] dans l'ordre des siècles il faut avoir certains temps marqués par quelque grand événement auquel on rapporte tout le reste. C'est ce qui s'appelle époque, d'un mot grec qui signifie s'arrêter, parce qu'on s'arrête là, pour considérer comme d'un lieu de repos tout ce qui est arrivé

l'Antiquité, et en particulier de France', Voss, *Das Mittelalter* 169. This chimes in with Voss's observation that *antiquité*, while originally denominating either the Greek and Roman past or the past more generally, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was transferred to the field of national and regional history, Ibid. 73.

²¹ Ibid 402

²² Mabillon, De re diplomatica 41 (book I, chapter IX).

²³ Ibid. 179 (book II, chapter XXIV); Voss, Das Mittelalter 402.

devant ou après, et éviter par ce moyen les anachronismes, c'est-à-dire cette sorte d'erreur, qui fait confondre les temps.²⁴

We shall keep Bossuet's words in mind as we turn to the ways in which Mabillon structures history and classifies texts. The Maurist was likewise in need of organizational markers as he, in Bossuet's words, also extended himself through the centuries. This comes across in various forms. Although Mabillon himself would see the historiographical and the monastic dimensions in his oeuvre as intertwined, we shall look at these two registers separately. In the brief text "Avis pour ceux qui travaillent aux Histoires des Monasteres", 25 he offers a manual for those who wish to write the history of a monastery on the basis of its archive. The text is a treasure; from the insider tips of an experienced archive-scholar (when transcribing documents, use good paper and good ink, do not make any abbreviations and remember to write in a large script and with ample margins), 26 to ideas as to the structure of the history that is to be composed on the basis of the mémoires collected in the archive. The history of small monasteries can be organized chronologically according to the different abbots; the history of large monasteries may be organized thematically in different books which treat the monastery in general, the abbots, other significant and saintly inmates, and so on. This distinction between chronological and thematic structuring is noteworthy; it attests to Mabillon's view of the historiographer as one who must organize the presentation of the past on the basis of his archival finds as well as to flexibility with regard to the parameters for this organization, adding a dimension to the idea of historiographical narratio.²⁷

For an examination of the monastic register of Mabillon's approach to the structuring of history and of the way in which he positions medieval authors in this structure, we shall turn to his manifesto on monastic studies, written as an answer to views voiced by the Trappist

²⁴ Bossuet J.-B., *Discours sur l'histoire universelle*, in: *Bossuet: Oeuvres*, ed. B. Velat – Y. Champallier (Paris: 1961) 667, Bossuet's italics.

²⁵ Mabillon Jean, "Avis pour ceux qui travaillent aux Histoires des Monasteres", in Thuillier Vincent (ed.), Ouvrages posthumes de D. Jean Mabillon et de D. Thierri Ruinart, benedictins de la Congrégation de Saint Maur, 3 vols. (Paris, François Babuty: 1724) II, 91–95.

²⁶ Ibid. 94.

²⁷ See e.g., Cicero, *De inventione* I, XIX.27–XXI.31 and the pseudo-Ciceronian *Ad Herennium* I,VIII.13–IX.16; see further Landfester R., *Historia magistra vitae: Untersuchungen zur humanistischen Geschichtstheorie des 14. bis 16. Jahrhunderts* (Geneva: 1972) 84–89.

reformer Armand-Jean de Rancé (1626-1700).²⁸ Godson of Richelieu and an ecclesiastic proficient in Greek, Rancé had basked in the Parisian salons and been chaplain to Louis XIII's brother Gaston d'Orléans, before, in the early 1660s, withdrawing from the world to the Cistercian monastery of La Trappe, which he made the pivot of an austere reform. Rancé presented his monastic world-view in the work De la sainteté et des devoirs de la vie monastique (1683). Here he took up, among many issues, the Benedictine topos of manual labour and reading as the remedy to idleness. His views on study appear in Questions IV-VI, a mere eighteen pages out of the seventy-page chapter on manual labour: they were to resonate in the ecclesiastical world and colour, most often indeed taint, the view of Rancé both in his time and afterwards. The reformer, in short, denied the value of study in the monastery, his principal argument being that '[...] le dessein de Dieu en suscitant des Solitaires dans son Eglise, n'a pas esté de former des Docteurs, mais des penitens [...]'.29 Six years later Rancé added fuel to the fire with an edition of the Rule of Benedict, interpreted according to its proper spirit, La Régle de Saint Benoist nouvellement traduite et expliquée selon son véritable esprit (1689), claiming that studies were inconsistent with the Rule of Benedict which both Cistercians and Maurists were bound by. The crux is the question of the nature of the lectio divina mentioned in Chapter 48 of the Rule.³⁰ Rancé has no doubt that monks read to gain piety, not knowledge, and only if one has received a toute évidente vocation from God to that effect should one engage in scholarly reading.31

²⁸ The principal works on Rancé and his reform are: Bell D.N., *Understanding Rancé: The Spirituality of the Abbot of La Trappe in Context* (Kalamazoo: 2005), Krailsheimer A.J., *Armand-Jean de Rancé: Abbot of La Trappe* (Oxford: 1974), and Waddell C., "The Cistercian Dimension of the Reform of La Trappe", in Elder E.R. (ed.), *Cistercians in the Late Middle Ages* (Kalamazoo: 1981) 102–161.

²⁹ Rancé Armand-Jean de, *De la sainteté et des devoirs de la vie monastique* (Paris, François Muguet: 1683) II, 292 (chapter XIX, question IV). In a later text he added that on the Day of Judgment Christ would not enquire about theology but about the monks' obedience and humility, Rancé Armand-Jean de, *Réponse au Traité des études monastiques* (Paris, François Muguet: 1692) 281 (part II, chapter VIII).

³⁰ 'Otiositas inimica est animae, et ideo certis temporibus occupari debent fratres in labore manuum, certis iterum horis in lectione divina', *Regula Benedicti* XLVIII.1; Fry T. – Horner I. – Baker I. (eds.), *RB 1980: The Rule of St. Benedict* (Collegeville: 1981) 248.

³¹ Rancé Armand-Jean de, *La Régle de Saint Benoist nouvellement traduite et expliquée selon son véritable esprit*, 2 vols. (Paris, François Muguet: 1689) II, 279–281 (chapter XLVIII).

The Maurist Vincent Thuillier gives a vivid – and much later – account of the commotion throughout the monastic and ecclesiastical world which Rancé's work and its alleged singularity caused, and narrates how Mabillon only after nine years gave in to immense pressure from those around him and published his Traité des études monastiques (1691).³² The Maurist could not but protest; his monastic zeal was to a large extent invested in pious scholarly pursuits.³³ The *Traité* is a composite work in three parts. The first part lists the ways in which study had been incorporated in monastic life by, for example, Benedict and Bernard ('On voit encore à Citeaux plusieurs de ces petites cellules, où les copistes & les relieurs de livres travailloient')34 and had been encouraged by popes and councils. The allusion to Bernard is a heavy argument since he is the main figure of the Cistercians and since Rancé understood his reform at La Trappe as Bernardine.³⁵ The second part of Mabillon's treatise describes the kinds of studies and disciplines in which monks might usefully engage. The third part embraces the first two in an overall monastic perspective, with an exposé on the knowledge of truth and the love of justice as the primary goals of monastic study. The appendices include, among other things, a Liste

³² Thuillier, Ouvrages posthumes I, 365–366. Mabillon's treatise was not the final word. In March 1692 appeared Rancé's Réponse au Traité des études monastiques, answered in September the same year by Mabillon's Réflexions sur la Réponse au Traité des études monastiques. Louis XIV's niece, Mme de Guise, who was a friend of both men, brought about a meeting, and in May 1693 Mabillon visited La Trappe. A letter written by Rancé the same day expresses his admiration for the Maurist, Krailsheimer A.J. (ed. and transl.), The Letters of Armand-Jean de Rancé, 2 vols. (Kalamazoo: 1984) II, 211–212, and a few weeks later Mabillon recounts to a friend how, during his visit, he and Rancé gave assurances of their mutual respect and eventually knelt and embraced each other; letter to Claude Estiennot, 15 June 1693 (in Thuillier erroneously '1673'), Thuillier, Ouvrages posthumes I, 417–418.

³³ The Maurist Antoine Mège had already reacted against Rancé's *De la sainteté* and the abbot's view on religious studies in his *Commentaire sur la Règle de saint Benoist, où les sentimens et les maximes de ce saint sont expliqués par la doctrine des Conciles, des SS. Pères [...]* (Paris, la veuve d'Edme Martin, Jean Boudot, and Etienne Martin: 1687), which in turn spurred on Rancé's own commented translation of the Rule of Benedict, see Bell, *Understanding Rancé* 271–272. Later followed another Maurist response in Edmond Martène's *Commentarius in regulam S. P. Benedicti* (Paris, François Muguet: 1690).

³⁴ Mabillon Jean, *Traité des études monastiques* (Paris, Charles Robustel: 1691) 55 (part I, chapter X).

³⁵ See, for an early indication, letters of 30 April and 30 May 1663, Krailsheimer, *The letters of Armand-Jean de Rancé* I, 20–21. Rancé's contemporary biographers were at pains to represent him as *un autre Bernard*, see for example le Nain Pierre, *La vie du reverend pere Dom Armand Jean le Boutillier de Rancé*, 3 vols. ([s.l.], Florentin Delaulne: 1715) II, 387 and III, 213–214.

des principales difficultez, qui se rencontrent dans la lecture des conciles, des Peres, & de l'histoire ecclesiastique par ordre des siecles, listing historical quandaries such as: How many bishops were present at the council of Arles? Did Bernard of Clairvaux preach in French or Latin? Did the council of Basel act in good faith with regard to Jan Hus? — as well as a rich and varied Catalogue des meilleurs livres avec les meilleures éditions. Pour composer une Bibliotéque ecclesiastique.

Mabillon's prescription of the ideal monastic curriculum is significant. First, unsurprisingly, there is Scripture. Then come les saintes Peres. These should be read in the collections made by monks; such as the Augustine anthology collected by abbot Eugippius in the sixth century, or the assemblage of moral matters, excerpted from 'most of the ancient fathers' by the monk Defensor (of Ligugé).³⁹ The works of the Fathers are divided into five broad themes: the interpretation of Scripture, the dogma of faith, Christian morality, the discipline of the Church, and monastic morals and discipline. Mabillon goes through each of the five, listing the Fathers who have dealt with it. For example, as authors who have treated dogma specifically, he mentions Augustine, Bede, Hrabanus Maurus, Anselm of Canterbury, and Bernard of Clairvaux. The chapter on monastic morals and discipline is by far the most comprehensive. It is organized in different themes; for instance, insight into monastic rules may fruitfully be acquired through the five volumes of ascetic texts compiled by the Maurists, 40 and the stance of the Fathers as to discipline may be found in recent compilations.⁴¹ But the most important books for monks are those by Bernard of Clairvaux: 'Ils trouveront dans cette lecture tout ce qu'ils peuvent chercher ailleurs, la solidité, l'agrément, la diversité, la justesse, la briéveté, le feu, les mouvemens [...]'.42 The chapter on the Fathers is followed by another on ecclesiastical councils, canon law, and civil law, and then one on scholastic theology - here Mabillon takes a critical stand, seeing in scholasticism a forerunner of casuistry. Then follows the study

³⁶ Mabillon, Traité des études 410.

³⁷ Ibid. 422; a question with which scholarship is still concerned, see Kienzle B., "The Twelfth-Century Monastic Sermon", in Kienzle B.M. (ed.), *The Sermon*, Typologie des sources du Moyen Âge Occidental 81–83 (Turnhout: 2000) 287–288.

³⁸ Mabillon, Traité des études 423.

³⁹ Ibid. 173–174 (part II, chapter III).

⁴⁰ Ibid. 180 (part II, chapter III).

⁴¹ Such as Louis Thomassin, Ancienne et nouvelle discipline de l'église (1678–1679).

⁴² Mabillon, *Traité des études* 181 (part II, chapter III).

of sacred and profane history, philosophy, and *belles lettres*. To sum up, Mabillon has an eye on chronology, but his overview is principally arranged according to a hierarchical structure of fields and themes. This means that scholasticism ranks after contemporary theology and that the thirteenth-century chronicler Matthew Paris comes before Tacitus. Like Bossuet the Maurist charts history; his organizational device, however, is not epochs but degrees of saintliness and edificational value.

Truth and Method

In the introduction to *De re diplomatica* Mabillon states: 'It would be most astonishing, if no falsifications or corruptions were to appear in such a variety of autographs or authentic texts and samples, which have been transmitted to us from such a long sequence of years, by the hands of so many different nations'. 43 The text which the seventeenth-century reader has before him is separated from its origin by a barbed-wire entanglement of temporal distance and a multitude of intermediaries. The statement echoes humanist viewpoints and comes across as a commonplace within the context of textual criticism. At the same time, we must bear in mind the monastic tendency to treat predecessors as a kind of contemporaries in the spirit, and there is a thought-provoking tension between the distance which is epitomized in this statement, and which has a resonance in Mabillon's preface to the revised edition of Bernard's works, 44 and the immediacy, indeed vividness, of the Bernardine message described in the chapter of readings from the Fathers. Here we shall linger over the topos of inaccessibility.

⁴³ 'At valde mirum esset, si in tanta autographorum seu authenticorum & exemplorum varietate, quæ ex tam longa annorum serie, per tot diversarum nationum manus ad nos transmissa sunt, adulterina aut vitiosa nulla reperirentur', Mabillon, *De re diplomatica* 1. A supplementary perspective to this distance between the seventeenth-century reader and the medieval text is offered in Voss's survey of ways in which medieval features were still present in seventeenth-century French society: the nobility still had a role to play, churches were still built according to Gothic principles, tournaments were still held, medieval literary forms were still cultivated, Voss, *Das Mittelalter* 126–127.

⁴⁴ '[...] ut multo ac longo labore [...] tum ad faciendam non tam voluminum, quam foliorum hac illacque dispersorum collectionem, ac variantium lectionum delectum; tum ad sanandos locos male affectos et ad obscura penetranda; tum denique ad instruendam genuinorum operum censuram', "Præfatio generalis" II *Patrologia Latina* 182, 13–14.

The route by which the scholar may penetrate this tangle and get at the authentic core is critique, a concept much in vogue at the time. Stemming from the adjective κριτικός, discerning or judging, critique has partly an aesthetic function associated with the appraisal of a work of art according to its fulfilment of particular rules or its ability to please, 45 partly a scholarly function related to the examination of ancient texts. living on in the scholarly disciplines of, for example, textual or literary criticism. 46 The epidemic growth of critique is attested to by Mabillon: 'Rien n'est aujourd'huy plus à la mode que la critique. Tout le monde s'en mesle, & il n'y a pas jusqu'aux femmes qui n'en fassent profession'.47 Another indicator is that it merits mockery (in 1691) by La Bruyère: 'La critique souvent n'est pas une science, c'ést un métier, où il faut [...] plus de travail que de capacité, plus d'habitude que de génie [...]'.48 Somewhat in opposition to this bleak portrayal, critique was a perilous enterprise; Richard Simon's seminal examinations of the Bible in the second half of the seventeenth century led to his expulsion from the Oratory.49 Mabillon too met with opposition because of his critical methods. Fellow Maurists accused him of disrespectful handling of monastic truths and demanded that he retract his claims that the Benedictine Order had experienced a number of crises caused by the weight of its material possessions, or that an interdict be laid upon him.⁵⁰ One of the cruxes in this complex is the way in which,

⁴⁵ Furetière, Le dictionnaire universel 'critique'; Dens J.-P., L'honnête homme et la critique du goût: Esthétique et societé au XVII^e siècle (Lexington, KY: 1981) esp. 59–93.

⁴⁶ Burke P., The Renaissance Sense of the Past (London: 1969) 50–69.

⁴⁷ Mabillon, *Traité des études* 290 (part II, chapter XIII). In his reply to Mabillon's treatise, Rancé, cunningly, picks on exactly this point, stating that the fact 'que cette Critique est un desordre, & un déréglement si général' proves that it should not be attempted by monks who must be secluded from the sentiments, behaviour, and actions of the world, *Réponse au Traité des études monastiques* 329 (part II, chapter XIII).

⁴⁸ La Bruyère: Les Caractères, ed. L. van Delft (Paris: 1998) 155.

⁴⁹ Richard Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament* (1678–1685) and *Histoire critique du texte du Nouveau Testament* (1689). Mabillon may have had Simon in mind when he wrote that disentangling the genealogies of the Scriptures and pointing out embarrassing chronological issues is not the same as knowing them, *Traité des études* 385–386 (part III, chapter I).

⁵⁰ See Barret-Kriegel B., "Brièves réflections sur quelques règles de l'histoire", in Grell C. and Dufays J.-M. (eds.), *Pratiques et concepts de l'histoire en Europe XVI'—XVIIIe siècles* (Paris: 1990) 85–96. In 1678 Mabillon's fellow Maurists Antoine Mège and Philippe Bastide brought before the General Chapter the claim that 'un homme qui n'a jamais écrit d'histoires et qui n'a fait que des préfaces ne doit pas usurper le nom et la qualité d'historien', Barret-Kriegel, "Brièves réflections" 86–87. Unsurprisingly, the three Maurists were reconciled during the conflict with Rancé. Barret-Kriegel, "Brièves réflections" 86, see also Bell, *Understanding Rancé* 271–272.

at this point and with Mabillon as a key figure, the work of textual criticism and the writing of monastic history is brought into interaction. Seen in a wider perspective, the conflict between Mabillon and his fellow Maurists revolves itself into a clash between conceptions of truth. There is the historiographical concern with truth, of classical origin, which to some extent implies a blending of erudition and historiographical narrative,⁵¹ and an idea of truth which relies more heavily on notions of religious tradition. 52 His adversaries Antoine Mège and Philippe Bastide state that the primary aim of the historian must be to tell the truth and that Mabillon has dishonoured the Order 'par une critique très injuste', 53 and while their understanding of critique is probably less technical than his, it is remarkable that they swoop down on exactly the tool with which Mabillon unearthed what he saw as the truthful core from a heap of the correct and the falsified.⁵⁴

Significantly the level-headed Maurist maintains a critical approach also when it comes to critique: it is often abused to take liberties and employed not only on human science but also on the dogma of faith. People misapply it to make statements about religious affairs with more confidence than a Council; 'Les siecles precedens ont peché par un excés de simplicité & de credulité: mais dans celui-cy les pretendus esprits forts ne reçoivent rien qui n'ait passé par leur tribunal'. ⁵⁵ But if carried out correctly critique resembles the endeavours of a judge. Mabillon sums it up in four key points. First, 'que la chose soit de la competence de celuy qui juge'.56 This means that a good critic must be well-versed in the things he is examining. As an example Mabillon mentions the grammarian who is not at all competent to deal with theological questions. Second, 'que le Juge apporte tous les soins & toutes les diligences necessaires pour s'éclaireir & s'instruire duëment

⁵¹ While prevalent in the sixteenth century (see Landfester, Historia Magistra Vitae 94–108), in the seventeenth century this principle by and large gave way to a rhetorically flavoured historiography, mirrored in Furetière's definition of histoire as 'Description, narration des choses comme elles sont, ou des actions comme elles se sont passées, ou comme elle se pouvoient passer', Furetière, *Le dictionnaire universel* 'histoire'.

Tavard G., *La tradition au XVII* siècle (Paris: 1969) 19–53.

⁵³ Barret-Kriegel, "Brièves réflections" 86. This charge must be seen against the backdrop of Luc d'Achery's programmatic statement at the Maurist General Chapter in 1648 that the editorial programme had as its aim the honour and glory of the Order, Mellot, "Les Mauristes et l'édition érudite" 75.

⁵⁴ See Mabillon, *Traité des études* 291–292 (part II, chapter XIII).

⁵⁵ Ibid. 291 (part II, chapter XIII).

⁵⁶ Ibid.

du fait dont il s'agit'.⁵⁷ Third, 'qu'il ne juge que sur de bonnes preuves'.⁵⁸ Fourth, 'qu'il soit sans prejugez & sans passions'.⁵⁹ Thus may the critical scholar penetrate the layers of potential falsification, error, and opaqueness by which he is separated from the text before him. Behind the critical acumen, however, appears the ground which Mabillon has in common with Bastide and Mège: 'Il ne s'agit que de recueillir & de conserver fidelement le dépost de la Tradition'.⁶⁰

Conclusion

By way of conclusion let us return to the struggle between Mabillon and Rancé. Barret-Kriegel draws up the fronts of the *querelle* in a categorical vein: the humblest of the humble against the proudest of the proud, the peasant's son who was born with nothing against the nephew of the superintendent to whom nothing was denied, he who sought the light of the spirit against him who wanted the annihilation of knowledge, he who wished to perfect himself against him who fancied himself distinguished.⁶¹ She claims that Mabillon won the contest but that this was a pyrrhic victory, and sees *De re diplomatica* as the swan song of the Colbert era and its predilection for science,⁶² draw-

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Ibid. 293 (part II, chapter XIII). He later stated that critique is a bulwark against blindness, superstition, doubtful miracles, and ill-founded visions, *Réflexions sur la Réponse au Traité des études monastiques* (Paris, Charles Robustel: 1692) 224; Neveu, "Mabillon et l'historiographie gallicane" 65.

⁶¹ Barret-Kriegel, Jean Mabillon 145.

⁶² Ibid. 113–114. According to Barret-Kriegel, Rancé won because he gained a literary afterlife. Chateaubriand's Vie de Rancé (1844) plays a significant role in this argumentation, and Barret-Kriegel ties her conclusion to Roland Barthes's essay on Chateaubriand's Vie, stating that Rancé was to be exalted as an écrivain français, and that Barthes, via Chateaubriand, constructs Rancé's life as a literary act par excellence, condensing literature into a matter of isolated subjectivity, Jean Mabillon 143–144. But in fact Barthes says about Rancé '[...] sa conversion religieuse n'en a pas moins été un suicide d'écrivain', Barthes R., "Chateaubriand: Vie de Rancé", in id., Le degré zéro de l'écriture suivis de Nouveaux essais critiques (Paris: 1972) 106–120, esp. 118, see also "Écrivains et écrivants" (1960), in Essais critiques (Paris: 1964) 147–154. Other scholars have been at pains to stress Mabillon's significant Wirkungsgeschichte, see, for example, Edelman, Attitudes of Seventeenth-Century France 57 and, for a Benedictine perspective, Knowles, Historian 227. Contrary to Barret-Kriegel, Bruno Neveu and Jean-Dominique Mellot underline the public and royal sympathy with the Maurist projects because their work was seen as addressing the Gallican past as opposed to the works

ing the fronts between two different tempers and between love and hatred of knowledge. But in her admiration for the scholarly outlook of Mabillon she seems to disregard the fact that both he and Rancé were above all monks. Each of them sought what he considered the most fruitful way to monastic perfection, Mabillon through an extension, Rancé through a contraction of horizons. Thus the controversy was concerned less with science than with the question of the proper administration of the monastic legacy and the best access to the edifying messages of the texts of the Christian tradition. There is a marked difference between their approaches to this legacy, crystallized in their handling of Bernard of Clairvaux. On the one hand, we have the Maurist who edited the medieval Cistercian's works with a mixture of critical diligence and fond admiration; the man who may be considered the executor of the authorial legacy of the medieval abbot. On the other hand, we have the Trappist who reformed his monastery in austere vein out of deference to, among others, Bernard of Clairvaux and regarded himself as primary executor of the abbot's ascetic and monastic legacy. For Mabillon, there is an obligation to carve out the correct version from a tangle of manuscripts and variants by dint of critically informed toil. For Rancé, what is not there to take is not a licit object for the attention of the monk. But what is there for the taking serves the legitimization of his reform and the edification of his monks. In their respective approaches to Bernard, the two monks seem to be epitomes of Workman's double definition of medievalism. Mabillon studies the Middle Ages, Rancé uses them.

Nonetheless, I suggest that Mabillon's is not a clear-cut case of medievalism. He does not operate with a pronounced concept of the Middle Ages, largely speaking not even with the term Middle Ages, and he does not see himself as a medievalist but above all as an adherent to the monastic tradition. However, I also suggest that we can choose to treat him, heuristically, as a medievalist, reading across his oeuvre, as sketched in this chapter, in pursuit of the ways in which he approaches the texts from the Middle Ages and viewing him as one

of the Jesuits, Neveu, "Mabillon et l'historiographie gallicane" 27–81 and id., Érudition et religion aux XVIIIe et XVIIIE siècles (Paris: 1994) 179; Mellot, "Les Mauristes et l'édition érudite" 73–88. Like Barret-Kriegel, Lawrence focuses on personalities and comes down on Mabillon's side: 'Rancé displays all the blind rigidity of the self-appointed dogmatist; and the chief merit of his shrill polemic was that it provoked the great monk-scholar Jean Mabillon to write his magnificent apologia for monastic scholarship', Lawrence C.H., Medieval Monasticism (Harlow: 2001) 33.

example within the spectrum of Early Modern Medievalism. Such a reading displays a medievalist profile of a double nature. On the one hand, Mabillon urges monks to embrace, with monastic zeal, the fire, diversity, and agility of Bernard of Clairvaux; and with regard to spiritual *Anrede* he considers the medieval texts immediately accessible. On the other hand, he stresses the gap between reader and manuscript and the layers of obscurities and errors which cloud the genuine version; and he exhorts his readers to scrutinize the medieval manuscripts with a cool and balanced critique. To a modern reader, Mabillon may come across as a Janus-faced medievalist who addresses monks and scholars in turn; but Mabillon saw these two sides as intertwined strands in the monastic search for knowledge of truth and love of justice — as he was at pains to demonstrate in his conflict with Rancé.

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THE EARLY MODERN CONSTRUCTION OF MEDIEVAL JEWISH THOUGHT*

Adam Shear

In this brief essay, I outline a two-fold argument in order to offer a contribution to the general discussion of 'early modern medievalisms' using early modern Jewish intellectual history as a case study. First, I want to sketch the broad outlines of an argument that a particular conceptualization of medieval Jewish philosophy prevailed as the mainstream (with exceptions of course) in the early modern period from the late fifteenth century through the eighteenth-century period of the Jewish Enlightenment (*Haskalah*), and even into the nineteenth century. Second, I argue that this conception of medieval Jewish philosophy might be well understood as a particular form of an 'early modern medievalism' that can be distinguished from medievalism as it operated in the (late) modern period. Medievalism here can be understood in both the general sense of study of and interest in the Middle Ages and also in the more specific sense of favoring or prioritizing medieval forms of thought, literature, or artistic expression.²

Much scholarship on Jewish philosophy makes a sharp distinction between a 'medieval' tradition which is seen as coming to a creative close sometime around the expulsion of Jews from Spain in 1492 and a 'modern' tradition which supposedly begins with Moses Mendelssohn (1729–1786) and his colleagues in the *Haskalah*.³ Figures from the early modern period (c. 1492–c. 1750) are often seen as uncreative followers

^{*} I am grateful to all the conference participants for their helpful responses to my paper.

As I am currently at a relatively early stage of a long-term research project on the transmission of medieval Jewish philosophy in the early modern period, this essay should be seen as a preliminary programmatic and exploratory contribution.

² As we learned through discussion at the conference in Leiden, this latter sense may be a connotation found primarily in English and in Anglo-American literary and historical study.

³ Mendelssohn was a prominent figure associated with the *Haskalah*, but not the leader of the movement as is commonly supposed. See Feiner S., "Mendelssohn and 'Mendelssohn's Disciples': A Re-Examination," *Leo Baeck Institute Year Book* 40 (1995) 134–167.

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of the medieval tradition or as early exemplars of the modern (as in the case of Baruch/Benedict Spinoza).⁴ However, when one views the problem from the perspective of intellectual and cultural history rather than through the narrower lens of the history of philosophy, the relationship of medieval and modern becomes more complex.

The Haskalah as Origin-Point for Jewish Modernity

The *Haskalah* can best be understood as a series of successive movements of Jewish intellectuals from the late eighteenth through the late nineteenth century that argued for a modernizing agenda of social and cultural reform for the Jews of Europe. The first group of adherents of *Haskalah*, known as *maskilim*,⁵ emerged in Berlin and a few other cities in Central Europe in the second half of the eighteenth century. Drawn largely from a secondary elite of young medical students, clerks and tutors with a rabbinic education, and a few rabbis, the eighteenth-century *maskilim* — of whom Mendelssohn became the most famous — argued for a change in the education of Ashkenazic Jewry.⁶ In contrast to the almost exclusive emphasis on the study of the Talmud and

⁴ For an example of the view that this period represented uncreative continuity with the medieval, see Davidson H., "Medieval Jewish Philosophy in the Sixteenth Century", in Cooperman B.D. (ed.), *Jewish Thought in the Sixteenth Century* (Cambridge, MA: 1983) 106–145. On the transitional nature of this period, see Harvey S., "The Introductions of Early Enlightenment Thinkers as Harbingers of the Renewed Interest in the Medieval Jewish Philosophers", in Fontaine R. – Schatz A. – Zwiep I. (eds.) *Sepharad in Ashkenaz: Medieval Knowledge and Eighteenth-Century Enlightened Jewish Discourse* (Amsterdam: 1997) 85–104. And see also Tirosh-Rothschild H., "Jewish Philosophy on the Eve of Modernity", in Frank D.H. – Leaman O. (eds.), *History of Jewish Philosophy* (London: 1997) 499–573.

⁵ Maskilim is the plural term; maskil the singular.

⁶ In this period, the Ashkenazic Jewish world spanned a wide territory from Amsterdam and London in the west to the Ukraine in the east. Although there were important regional differences between 'Eastern Ashkenaz' (mainly the Jews living in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth before 1772) and 'Western Ashkenaz' (mainly the Jews living in German-speaking lands), in terms of language and religious customs, the entire area formed one *Kulterbereich* in most respects and Jews of early modern Europe could distinguish between 'Ashkenazic' Jews and other Jewish communities (e.g. 'Sephardim,' Italian Jews, and so forth). On the various definitions of Ashkenazic Jewish identity in the early modern period, see Davis J., "The Reception of the Shulhan 'Arukh and the Formation of Ashkenazic Jewish Identity', *Association for Jewish Studies Review* 26 (2002) 256–276. Although Jewish Enlightenment movements emerged among non-Ashkenazic Jews in the nineteenth century, that development is beyond the scope of this essay.

the *halakhic* codes in the traditional Ashkenazic curriculum, the early maskilim looked to contemporary and medieval curricular models among Spanish and Italian Iews and argued for the increased study of the Hebrew Bible on the one hand, and for the study of foreign languages (mainly German) and philosophy and science. In the 1770s and 1780s, the Berlin maskilim and some like-minded colleagues in Koenigsburg (East Prussia) founded literary societies, a Hebrew journal (*Ha-Meassef*), a school, and a printing press (attached to the school) to promote their agenda of cultural reform.8

By the end of the eighteenth century, the Haskalah had gained adherents (or perhaps it is better to say that the maskilim in Berlin had gained correspondents) throughout Europe. In the nineteenth century, Haskalah movements emerged successively among Jewish advocates of modernization, in various areas of Europe and the Middle East, most notably in Galicia (the formerly Polish territories of the Austrian empire), Russia, and the Ottoman empire. In the nineteenth century, the term *maskil* in Iewish culture was synonymous with 'modern' (or 'modernist'), a linguistic usage that prevailed in Eastern Europe until the beginning of the twentieth century. And Jewish historians largely accepted the self-perception of the maskilim (as well as of their traditionalist opponents) that the movement represents a significant break with the Jewish past.9

Medieval Fewish Philosophy in the (Modern) Fewish Enlightenment

In the eighteenth century, however, *Haskalah* was nearly synonymous with the study of philosophy. To be a maskil was to be a student of

⁷ For a good overview of the earliest phases of the movement up to the 1770s, see Sorkin D., "The Early Haskalah", in Feiner S. - Sorkin D. (eds.) New Perspectives on the Haskalah (London: 2001) 9–26; and the work of Feiner cited in the next footnote.

⁸ For a full survey of the eighteenth-century movement, see Feiner S., The Jewish Enlightenment (Philadelphia: 2004). For a brief survey of the entire movement, see id., "Towards a Historical Definition of the Haskalah", in Feiner - Sorkin, New Perspectives on the Haskalah 184-219. I concentrate here on the internal cultural politics of the movement although by the 1770s, the movement began to develop a political agenda which would become increasingly important in the 1780s and 1790s, as increased Jewish rights and eventually full emancipation was placed on the agenda of political discussion in Europe.

⁹ On the maskilic influence on modern Jewish historiography, see Bartal I., The Jews of Eastern Europe, 1772–1881, trans. Ch. Naor (Philadelphia: 2005), and the sources cited in note 22 below.

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philosophy (in the broadest sense of the term) and to study philosophy was to gain *Haskalah* (enlightenment). Such usage was in keeping with earlier linguistic practice — we find the term *maskil* in earlier Hebrew texts going back to the Bible, in which the term connoted someone with wisdom and understanding. It was only in the late eighteenth century, however, as a Jewish version of the European Enlightenment movements began to coalesce, that the word *Haskalah* was transformed into a term that named an ideological movement and came to be synonymous with the German *Aufklärung*. 11

Almost two decades ago, Amos Funkenstein pointed to the crucial role of medieval Jewish philosophy in the *Haskalah*. Indeed, he argued that 'one can, without exaggeration, tie the beginning of the *Haskalah* to the renewed interest in medieval religious philosophy'. ¹² Moreover, he noted that this attitude constituted a 'blatant' distinction between the Jewish Enlightenment and the general trends of the over-all European Enlightenment movement which largely viewed the medieval period with disdain and medieval philosophy as obscurantist. ¹³ The *maskilim*, on the other hand, turned to medieval Jewish philosophers

¹⁰ See Feiner, "A Historical Definition" 186–190, and the work of Uzi Shavit cited there.

¹¹ See ibid. 188–190. In his work, Feiner distinguishes an 'Early *Haskalah*' phase that began before the 1770s and continued after; and a '*Haskalah* proper' that emerges only in the 1780s. In his view, the association of *Haskalah* with rational philosophy represents a more limited 'Early *Haskalah*' understanding of the term; while the association of *Haskalah* with the full Kantian connotations of *Aufklärung* is indicative of the more mature phase of the movement. While Feiner's distinction between 'Early *Haskalah*' and *Haskalah* is very helpful in understanding the development of the movement, it does not seem that fundamentally different attitudes toward Jewish philosophy can be found between the two phases.

¹² Funkenstein A., Perceptions of Jewish History (Berkeley: 1993) 235. This was first published in a German version in 1990, "Das Verhältnis der jüdischen Aufklärung zur mittelalterlichen jüdischen Philosophie", Aufklärung und Haskala, Wolfenbütteler Studien zur Aufklärung 14 (1990) 13–21. For recent comment on Funkenstein, see Shear A., The Kuzari and the Shaping of Jewish Identity, 1167–1900 (Cambridge: 2008) 210–212; Freudenthal G., "Jewish Traditionalism and Early Modern Science: Rabbi Israel Zamosc's Dialectic of Enlightenment (Berlin, 1744)", in Westman R.S. – Biale D. (eds.), Thinking Impossibilities: The Legacy of Amos Funkenstein (Toronto: 2008) 63; and Socher A., "Aristotle & the Ostjuden: Philosophical Thought Among the First Generations of Eastern European Maskilim", in Greenspoon L.J. – Simkins Ronald A. – Horowitz B. (eds.) The Jews of Eastern Europe, Studies in Jewish Civilization 16 (Lincoln, Nebraska: 2005) 297–311.

¹³ Funkenstein, *Perceptions* 235. Although all scholars might not agree with Funkenstein's point in all its ramifications, I think most would agree that republication of, commentary on, and frequent appeals to the authority of medieval Jewish philosophers were key aspects of the *Haskalah* movement in the eighteenth century.

such as Saadia Gaon (892-942), Judah Halevi (c. 1075-1141), and most prominently Moses Maimonides (1135–1204), as predecessors, as models, and in fact, as heroes. In other words, in the heart of the first Jewish modernizing movement – among the first self-conscious Jewish modernists – we find a kind of medievalism. 14

Funkenstein sketches out five reasons that the maskilim turned to these figures: (1) for 'legitimation' – the medievals offered the necessary precedent in a traditionalist culture; (2) for 'compensation' – the great accomplishments of the medievals offered comfort to a group of intellectuals struggling with their own sense of inferiority; (3) as symbolic 'prefiguration'; (4) as on-going reminders of their own biographical path toward wisdom; and (5) for pedagogical purposes, as the medievals offered a good way to introduce philosophy to potential members of the movement drawn from the ranks of young yeshiva students steeped in rabbinic literature.¹⁵

It is tempting to explain away the apparent paradox of medievalizing modernists by emphasizing the apologetic and legitimizing aspects of maskilic interest just mentioned. In this view, the maskilic interest in medieval Jewish philosophy is best seen as merely a convenient vehicle to introduce radical and modern ideas: the maskilim could hide behind medievalism to get around potential objections to their activity by traditionalists. 16 However, such an explanation is insufficient when we note the enormous energy devoted to these philosophers. An entirely different approach might explain the interest in medieval philosophy as evidence for the essentially conservative and religious nature of the *Haskalah*.¹⁷ If we stretch the point just a bit (or just a little bit too much), we might suggest that the Haskalah was really a sort of Counter-Enlightenment – and a medievalist Counter-Enlightenment makes some sense. But this would also twist things a bit too far out of shape: the *maskilim* explicitly declared their embrace of the new, argued

¹⁴ I offer an extended discussion of the Haskalah's relation to medieval Jewish philosophy in a chapter entitled "The Haskalah Beyond Western Europe" to be published in Kafka M. - Novak D. - Braiterman Z. (eds.), Cambridge History of Modern Tewish Philosophy.

¹⁵ Funkenstein, *Perceptions* 239–240.

¹⁶ See Shear, The Kuzari and the Shaping of Jewish Identity 281-287, for some nineteenth-century examples.

¹⁷ Here we can refer to David Sorkin's argument that the Berlin *Haskalah* should be understood as a 'religious Enlightenment', comparable to the Protestant and Catholic versions of Aufklärung. See Sorkin D., The Berlin Haskalah and German Religious Thought (London: 2000).

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for Jewish cultural (and later social) reform, and tied their embrace of medieval Jewish philosophy to their modernizing agenda.

Shifting the Periodization of the 'Dark Ages'

A more satisfying solution follows a different line of argument in seeing the *Haskalah* as a reformist movement within Ashkenazic Jewish culture, aimed at correcting the faults of a 'baroque' Judaism that had developed in Eastern Europe and Germany in the seventeenth and early eighteenth century. The *maskilim* sought a return to the cultural glories of the Sephardic and Italian Jewish past (and present, to some extent) by emphasizing the philosophical and scientific accomplishments of al-Andalus (Muslim Spain) and Sepharad (Christian Spain) over and against the popular mysticism (represented by Hasidism) and desiccated Talmudism (represented by the yeshiva world) that they saw around them. Never mind that these are also cultural stereotypes; that is exactly the point – the 'Sephardic mystique' operated in the *Haskalah* imaginary in a powerful way and the notion of 'reform' of Ashkenazic culture along Sephardic lines became a key motif in *maskilic* discourse. The control of the second of the

This model of *Haskalah* shifts the time-frame of the 'dark ages' in such a way that we might not see the *maskilic* approach as medievalism at all. Rather, the medieval philosophers in question become assimilated to a classical 'golden age'. What we think of as the 'early modern' becomes the new 'dark age'. Or, in the *maskilic* imagination, those who lived in what we think of as the medieval period belonged to the *antiqui*, while their immediate (early modern) Ashkenazic predecessors were the less-worthy *moderni*. In both the general Enlightenment and the *Haskalah*, then, the perception of the medieval includes both the mainstream 'Dark Ages' and the promise, or glimmer of hope, of alter-

¹⁸ For this view, see Sorkin, "The Early *Haskalah*"; and Feiner, *The Jewish Enlightenment*.
¹⁹ On the influence of images of Sepharad, see Feiner S., "Sefarad dans les représentations historiques de la Haskala: Entre modernisme et conservatisme", in Benbassa E. (ed.) *Mémoires juives d'Espagne et du Portugal* (Paris: 1996) 239–251. The theme of Sephardic influence among modern Jewish movements in the nineteenth century is explored by Schorsch I., "The Myth of Sephardic Supremacy", *Leo Baeck Institute Yearbook* 34 (1989) 47–66. I borrow the term 'sephardic mystique' from Ivan Marcus although he uses it in reference to twentieth-century historiography ("Beyond the Sephardic Mystique", *Orim: A Jewish Journal at Yale* 1 [1985] 35–53).

native society that preserved the glories of the classical age. Elsewhere, I have suggested the following schematic description of the difference between the *maskilic* view of the past and the general Enlightenment view. The general Enlightenment view would look something like this:

Period 1: The Golden Age = Classical period and early Christianity.

Period 2: The Dark Age = European Middle Ages, characterized by obscurantism and superstition. However, during Period 2, a glimmer of the Golden Age kept alive by the Alternate Society (for the more secular philosophes, the Alternate Society = Islam; for some Protestant Enlightenment thinkers, the Alternate Society = underground element of 'pure' Christianity).

Period 3: The Revival = Western Europeans return to the values of the Golden Age in the Renaissance and then Enlightenment, re-incorporating elements kept alive by the Alternate Society. A New Golden Age is anticipated as the values of the original Golden Age are combined with modernizing tendencies.

One might then sketch the *Haskalah*'s view as follows:

Period 1A and 1B: Two Golden Ages:

1A = Rabbinic period (parallel to the classical and the early Christian period):

1B = The Sephardic Judeo-Arabic culture of the Middle Ages.

Period 2: The Dark Age = Early Modern Ashkenazic culture, characterized by obscurantism and superstition. However, during Period 2, a glimmer of the Golden Age kept alive by the Alternate Societies = Renaissance Italy and the Sephardic Diaspora.

Period 3: The Revival = the *Haskalah*'s return to the values of the original Golden Age combined with a modernizing outlook. A New Golden Age is anticipated.20

In other words, it may be that the *Haskalah*'s medievalism turns out to be a kind of semantic illusion and really not a 'medievalism' at all. What is 'medieval' for the non-Jewish philosophe turns out to be

²⁰ Adapted from Shear, The Kuzari and the Shaping of Jewish Identity 211. There are problems with this scheme as I discuss there. Cf. Skinner P., "Viewpoint: Confronting the 'Medieval' in Medieval History: The Jewish Example", Past and Present 181 (2003) 229–231. She points out that the general view of the nineteenth-century Wissenschaft des Judenthums movement, growing out of the Haskalah, is of a bleak and 'lachrymose' Jewish medieval history; however, the one bright spot was the Sephardic 'Golden Age'. Overall Skinner emphasizes that the Wissenschaft/Haskalah view is similar to that of the general Enlightenment, but I think in doing so, she misses the strong emphasis on the accomplishments of the medieval Sephardic thinkers and the differing periodization that I have suggested here.

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'classical' for the Jewish Enlightenment. And to the extent that 'medievalism' can be defined as a kind of counter-cultural embrace of that which modernity has rejected as the 'other', then this is no medievalism, but rather a kind of classicism.

The Haskalah and Early Modern Jewish Culture

However, we must recognize the *Haskalah*'s construction of a gap between itself and early modern Jewish culture for what it is – a construction. The view that the *Haskalah* constitutes a decisive break from early modern Ashkenazic culture emerges within the *Haskalah* itself and then became a dominant motif in modern Jewish historiography. In the last few years, however, some scholars have suggested that we can see continuities between early modern developments (in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and early eighteenth centuries) and aspects of the *Haskalah* (in the eighteenth century). That is, the *Haskalah*'s image of itself as constituting a radical break from the previous two centuries of Jewish culture is now being examined with critical attention. Without denying that the *Haskalah* constituted a new kind of intellectual movement in Ashkenazic Judaism, we can also focus on some areas of continuity between the so-called early modern and the *Haskalah* (or rather we can view the *Haskalah* as an early modern phenomenon).

The *maskilic* recourse to the medieval is built on the early modern; indeed, is impossible without it. The *Haskalah* of the eighteenth century did not inherit medieval Jewish philosophy as it was in the twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth centuries, but rather inherited the medievals as published, transmitted, framed, and interpreted by the early moderns. The works of medieval Jewish philosophy read in the eighteenth and nineteenth century – works by Saadia Gaon, Judah Halevi,

²¹ And even Salo Baron's embrace of the medieval and his tracing the decline to the period of the ghetto fits well in this paradigm established by the *Haskalah*. On this, see ibid. 233–234. For a broad discussion of Baron's approach to medieval Jewish history, see Liberles R., *Salo Wittmayer Baron: Architect of Jewish History* (New York: 1995) esp. 94–124, and 338–359.

²² See the proceedings of two recent conferences (one in Amsterdam in 2002 and one in Leipzig in 2006): Fontaine – Schatz – Zwiep, Sepharad in Ashkenaz; and Feiner S. – Ruderman D. (eds.), Early Modern Culture and Haskalah – Reconsidering the Borderlines of Modern Jewish History = Jahrbuch des Simon-Dubnow-Institutes/Simon Dubnow Institute Yearbook 6 (2007).

Bahya ibn Pakuda, Moses Maimonides, Jediah Bedersi, Ibn Gabirol, Levi ben Gershom, Joseph Albo, and many others – were precisely those works printed in the sixteenth century. With few exceptions, the maskilim did not return to the manuscript legacy to retrieve works and print them for the first time. Rather, beginning with the republication of Maimonides' Guide of the Perplexed in Jessnitz in 1740 and continuing into the early nineteenth century at the presses of Frankfurt, Berlin, Vienna, Prague, Lvov (Lemberg), the philosophical works printed by maskilim were new editions – often with new commentaries – of works that had already been printed – often multiple times – in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Italy, the Ottoman Empire, and Poland.

The Synthetic/Harmonistic Tradition in Jewish Philosophy

Moreover, it was not only the shape of the canon that was begueathed to the maskilim but the basic conceptualization and interpretation of the nature and purpose of this canon. If we survey medieval Jewish theological and philosophical production within the sphere of rabbinic Judaism, a number of startlingly distinct positions emerge on questions of reason and revelation, on the centrality of certain doctrines within Judaism, on the place of philosophical study within Judaism, and indeed, on the very legitimacy of philosophical inquiry. As is well known, following the emergence of Maimonides' philosophical oeuvre in the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries, a number of controversies over the place of philosophy and over the proper interpretation of Maimonides ensued. With the introduction of Averroism into Jewish thought in the fourteenth century, a number of fairly radical rationalist positions emerged. And in fifteenth-century Spain, a lively debate occurred over whether philosophy had weakened faith and led to the apostasy of the conversos. In other words, an accurate historical view of medieval Jewish philosophers yields a picture of antirationalists and rationalists of various sorts: philosophically sophisticated fideists; moderate rationalists; anti-philosophical jurists; Averroist double-truth advocates, and so on.

Sixteenth-century Jewish scholars were aware of some of this diversity and sometimes republished works, especially those from the fifteenth century, that reproduced the controversies between these positions. The dominant trend, however, reflected in the paratexts that accompany printed editions, in the commentaries on works such as Halevi's 454 ADAM SHEAR

Book of the Kuzari or Maimonides' Guide of the Perplexed, or in new works of Jewish philosophy or apologetic, saw a group of medieval Jewish philosophers engaged in a kind of group project aiming at a reconciliation of reason and revelation, with priority for Torah where Torah and Aristotle could not be reconciled, and an apologetic purpose for the whole endeavor.

This synthetic approach – which has its roots in some fourteenth-and fifteenth-century discussions to be sure – was the dominant view of medieval Jewish philosophy from the end of the Middle Ages (or the beginning of the early modern period) until, I would argue, the second half of the nineteenth century, when historicism triumphed in both constructive Jewish philosophy and descriptive *Wissenschaftliche* scholarship. The 'early modern' approach attempted to harmonize the thinkers, and tended to view them as part of a single tradition of philosophical inquiry that was limited and bounded by revelation.²³

Here, we can offer one example of this view, from the early sixteenth century, in a rabbinic legal decision recently translated and published by Matt Goldish. A rabbi in Constantinople was asked about the case of a man who accused another man of heresy. Reuben had publically chastised Simeon for praying not to the 'God of Abraham' but the 'God of Aristotle'. The rabbi in turn criticizes Reuben not only for attempting to publically embarrass Simeon but also for misunderstanding Simeon's apparent interest in philosophy:

I must add that this mocker who came to Simeon did not denounce him alone but holy people of the land as well. For he slandered *geonim* [heads of the ancient Babylonian academies] and learned *rishonim* [medieval scholars] who studied the sciences, such as Rabbi Sa'adiah Ga'on and Rabbi Hai Ga'on, as well as other sages like Ibn Gabirol, Rabbi Judah ha-Levi, Rabbi Abraham ben Ezra, Maimonides, and sages of every generation. They established a great fortress with ramparts to fend off those who speak falsely against our holy Torah. Maimonides composed introductions to prove the truth of God's existence that were copied, commented upon, and used for betterment by the scholars of other nations. He brought proofs concerning the secrets of the Torah and its meanings, thereby banishing many doubts from the hearts of people who were confused by them in both earlier and later generations — all through learning the Torah and establishing what to answer the heretic [...].²⁴

²⁴ Eliyahu Ha-Levi, as quoted and translated in Goldish M., Jewish Questions: Response on Sephardic Life in the Early Modern Period (Princeton: 2008) 94–95.

²³ I develop the preceding argument at some length with regard to the reception of one of the classic works of medieval Jewish thought, in Shear, *The* Kuzari *and the Shaping of Jewish Identity*.

Here, a series of figures that modern scholarship will assign quite different outlooks and sensibilities vis-à-vis questions of reason and faith are marshaled as part of one legacy of philosophical and scientific inquiry. Some late medieval and early modern scholars emphasized differences in view between these figures, and the acrimony between Reuben and Simeon that led to the rabbinic opinion indicates that interest in philosophy could be controversial and viewed as heterodox. But the rabbi's harmonizing approach (whether tendentious or not) is broadly representative of a prevailing early modern view of Jewish philosophy and Jewish philosophers.

Continuity of the 'Synthetic' Approach in the Haskalah

This early sixteenth-century rabbinic defense of philosophy as aiding in the defense of the Torah and of religious belief is similar to what may be considered a typical maskilic explanation for rationalist inquiry and justification for the study of medieval Iewish philosophy.²⁵ Here, for example, is Isaac Satanow's explanation of the merits of Judah Halevi's Kuzari in his edition of that work, published in Berlin in 1795:

And just as purged silver is melted by the seller for examination and testing, in order that no buyer will doubt it, so too the believed-in faith [i.e. Judaism] is given to examination for its truth by rational investigation [...]. And that is because there is nothing in the Torah that is against reason [...]. And here is the book whose holy path is to make clear and elucidate and to arrive at all that is hidden in beliefs and opinions, in reason and knowledge, in order that investigation and tradition ride side by side together [...].26

In arguing for 'investigation' and 'tradition' riding side by side, Satanow, the *maskil* and advocate of cultural and social modernization of European Jewry, takes a position on reconciling reason and faith that has strong precedent in late medieval and early modern Jewish thought.²⁷ To be sure, just as there were dissenting views in the

²⁵ At this point, it is important to note that I am taking 'Jewish philosophy' as a distinct category for granted, but this is something that needs to be explored at greater length, something I do in my current project.

Satanow, preface to Kuzari, as quoted and translated by Shear, The Kuzari and the Shaping of Tewish Identity 227-228.

²⁷ For further comment on the ways that *maskilic* and early modern fideism resemble each other, see my article "'The Italian and Berlin Haskalah' Revisited",

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fifteenth and sixteenth century (either advocating for the rationalist or the anti-rationalist view), so too some *maskilim*, such as Solomon Maimon or Isaac Euchel, emphasized a more radically rationalist conception of Maimonides. And arguably, the kind of 'Counter-*Haskalah*' that emerged among traditionalist rabbis (who had initially shared a number of scientific and cultural interests with the early *maskilim*) coalesced around a sense that the *Haskalah* had gone too far in opening up Judaism to rationalist inquiry. Some of the *maskilim* who most epitomized this synthetic approach, such as Israel of Zamosc, may have seen the potential for the breakdown of this early modern take on the medieval philosophical tradition and backed away from the precipice.²⁸

But the mainstream of the *Haskalah*, from Zamosc and Moses Mendelssohn through the disintegration of a coherent movement in Russia in the 1880s, embraced the view of medieval Jewish philosophy that I have tried to describe here. This view was developed in the early modern period and relied on a particular canon of medieval authorities – Halevi, Maimonides, Saadia Gaon, Bahya ibn Pakuda, and others – whose works were printed in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

Ancients and Moderns

It is not that surprising that Jewish scholars would turn to older works as authorities. Most Jewish intellectuals up to the *Haskalah* subscribed to a theory of knowledge that emphasized the decline of the generations: from the Talmudic sages to the *geonim* (the heads of the rabbinic academies in the early Islamic period) to the *rishonim* (the medieval

Feiner S. – Ruderman D. (eds.), Early Modern Culture and Haskalah – Reconsidering the Borderlines of Modern Jewish History = Jahrbuch des Simon-Dubnow-Instituts/Simon Dubnow Institute Yearbook 6 (2007) 49–66.

²⁸ For discussion of Maimon and Euchel, see Socher, "Aristotle & the Ostjuden". For comment on Zamosc, see Freudenthal, "Jewish Traditionalism and Early Modern Science". For an example of the sort of counter-*Haskalah* figure I have in mind, see discussions of Pinhas Horowitz and his *Sefer ha-Berit* by Fontaine R., "Natural Science in *Sefer ha-Berit*: Pinchas Hurwitz on Animals and Meteorological Phenomena" in *Sepharad in Ashkenaz: Medieval Knowledge and Eighteenth-Century Enlightened Jewish Discourse* 157–183; id., "Love of One's Neighbour in Pinhas Hurwitz's *Sefer ha-Berit*" in Baasten M.F.J. – Munk R. (eds.) *Studies in Hebrew Literature and Jewish Culture Presented to Albert van der Heide on the Occasion of his Sixty-Fifth Birthday* (Dordrecht: 2007) 271–296; id., "The Immortality of the Soul in Pinchas Hurwitz's *Sefer ha-Berit*: Philosophers versus Kabbalists", *Tewish Studies Quarterly* 13 (2006) 223–233.

authorities) to the achronim (rabbis and intellectuals of the very recent past) there was an appreciable decline in ability and authority. While the precise boundary between the generations of rishonim and achronim varied from author to author (and while there was something of a quarrel of ancients and moderns in terms of the adjudication of halakhic issues in the early modern period) there is no question that Iews living in what we consider the 'early modern period' largely viewed themselves as living after the period of the rishonim and to some extent in a changed world, creating the need not only to print their works but also to comment on them in order to make the words of the 'sealed books' explicable to the 'modern' reader.29

However, no believing rabbinic Jew could understand himself as living in a fully changed era until the redemption of Israel – i.e. the 'medium aevum' that began with the destruction of the Temple in 70 CE continued as a theological and practical matter for early modern Jews. This point is crucial to an understanding of Jewish 'medievalism' because a key aspect of modern forms of 'medievalism' seems to be a sense of living in a post-medieval age and a desire to return to or to revive an imagined golden age. The approach to medieval Jewish philosophy that I am describing here idealized the imagined golden age (al-Andalus). However, because the basic facts of the Jewish political situation – limited communal autonomy, severely limited political rights, dependence on the benevolence of a central ruling authority, and the existential status of being in unredeemed exile (galut) – did not change from the late Middle Ages until the nineteenth century, neither the sixteenth-century Italian publishers of Jewish philosophy nor the eighteenth-century maskilim imagined as great a rupture between their age and the medieval past as would be required for a fully modern medievalism, i.e. one that reaches out to a past that has become discontinuous with the present.

Continuous Medievalism

Thus, the early modern construction of medieval Jewish philosophy from the first printings of medieval works in the fifteenth and sixteenth

²⁹ For an introduction to the *rishonim/achronim* distinction in Jewish culture, see Melamed A., On the Shoulders of Giants: The Debate between Moderns and Ancients in Medieval and Renaissance Tewish Thought (in Hebrew) (Ramat-Gan: 2003).

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centuries through the Haskalah suggests another kind of medievalism what we might call a continuous medievalism that modernizes by finding precedents in tradition and in which the authorities of the past are interpreted using all the creativity possible in the interpretation of a closed canon (more than we might think). A real rupture emerges in modernity as self-conscious breaks with tradition (modernism) and selfconscious defenses of tradition (traditionalism) emerge. (Late) modern Jewish philosophy in the later nineteenth and the twentieth centuries offers us a portrait of the medieval past as bifurcated/dichotomized/ polarized between particularism and anti-rationalism on the one hand, and universalism and rationalism on the other. Here, we can find examples of medievalism that embrace a particular figure, such as Judah Halevi, in order to reaffirm a kind of Jewish particularism and nationalism in the face of the liberal universalism that the logic of emancipation seems to dictate. Or conversely, a figure like Maimonides may be embraced as a kind of proto-modern medieval who anticipated the rationalism and scientism of modernity.³⁰

But the kind of medievalism that embraces both Maimonides and Halevi and that sees the project of medieval Jewish philosophy as an attempt to synthesize reason and faith appears to be very much an 'early modern medievalism'.³¹ That is, it seems to be a medievalism that depends on a sense of distance but not of rupture; on the construction of a canon of thinkers that has closed and whose texts are deemed authoritative (but can and should be subject to interpretation); and on a desire for revival that is revolutionary and not counterrevolutionary.

³⁰ For examples, see Shear, *The* Kuzari *and the Shaping of Jewish Identity*, "Conclusion: The Emergence of Late Modern Dichotomies" 293–313.

³¹ Cf. Claire Simmons' comments on a kind of 'medieval medievalism' in "Introduction", in *Medievalism and the Quest for the 'Real' Middle Ages* (London: 2001) 2.

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